قيام الليل

The Night Prayers

Qiyam & Tarawih

2nd Edition

Compiled by:

محمد الجبالي

Muhammad al-Jibali

From works by:

محمد ناصر الدين الألباني

Muhammad Nasir ud-Deen al-Albani

(and other scholars)

منشورات الكتاب والسنة

Al-Kitaab & as-Sunnah Publishing

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

﴿تَتَجَافَىٰ جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ﴾

السجدة ١٦

«Their (the believers') sides forsake their beds to invoke their Lord in fear and hope; and they spend out of what We bestow on them.»

[*As-Sajdah* 32:16]

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PRELUDE

Opening Sermon

إِنَّ ٱلْحَمْدَ لِلَّـٰهِ، نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ،
وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّـٰهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا.
مَنْ يَهْدِهِ ٱللَّـٰهُ فَلاَ مُضِلَّ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يُضْلِلْ فَلاَ هَادِيَ لَهُ.

Al-ḥamdu lillāh. Indeed, all praise is due to Allāh. We praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allāh from our souls' evils and our wrong doings. He whom Allāh guides, no one can misguide; and he whom He misguides, no one can guide.

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لاَ إِلَـٰهَ إِلاَّ ٱللَّهُ، وَحْدَهُ لاَ شَرِيكَ لَهُ.
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّداً عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ.

I bear witness that there is no (true) god except Allāh — alone without any partners. And I bear witness that Muḥammad (ﷺ) is His *'abd* (servant) and messenger. [1]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ٱتَّقُوا ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ،
وَلاَ تَمُوتُنَّ إِلاَّ وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ۝﴾ آل عمران ١٠٢

«O you who believe! Revere Allāh the right

---

1 The above two paragraphs, together with the following three portions of *Qur'ān*, are called *Khuṭbat ul-Ḥājah* (the Sermon of Need). Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) often started his speeches with this sermon, and he was keen to teach it to his companions. The *ḥadīth*s in this regard are recorded by Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā'ī, and others, and are narrated by Ibn Mas'ūd, Ibn 'Abbās, and others (رضي الله عنهم). A full discussion of the various reports of this sermon is provided by al-Albānī in his booklet, "*Khuṭbat ul-Ḥājah*", published by al-Maktab ul-Islāmī, Beirut.

reverence, and do not die except as **Muslims.»** [1]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ، وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا، وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً، وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا﴾ النساء ١

«O people! Revere your Lord who has created you from a single soul, created from it its mate, and dispersed from both of them many men and women. Revere Allāh through whom you demand things from one another, and (cherish the ties of) the wombs. Indeed, Allāh is ever-watchful over you.» [2]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ، وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ، وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا﴾ الأحزاب ٧٠-٧١

«O you who believe! Revere Allāh and say just words. He will then rectify your deeds and forgive your sins. He who obeys Allāh and His Messenger has certainly achieved a great victory.» [3]

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ،

وَخَيْرَ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ (ﷺ)، وَشَرَّ الْأُمُورِ مُحْدَثَاتُهَا،

وَكُلَّ مُحْدَثَةٍ بِدْعَةٌ، وَكُلَّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ، وَكُلَّ ضَلَالَةٍ فِي النَّارِ.

Verily, the best speech is Allāh's (ﷻ) speech; the best guidance is Muhammad's (ﷺ) guidance; and the worst matters (in creed or worship) are those innovated (by the people), for every innovated matter is a *bid'ah* (prohibited innovation), and every *bid'ah* is an act

1 *Āl 'Imrān* 3:102.

2 *An-Nisā'* 4:1.

3 *Al-Ahzāb* 33:70-71.

of misguidance that (whoever initiated it) will reside in the Fire. [1]

Defining Our Mission

Our goal in our works is propagating the true *Da'wah* that derives from Allāh's (ﷻ) Book and His Messenger's (ﷺ) *Sunnah*. This is a duty that every Muslim should cherish. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ، وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾ آل عمران ١٠٤

«Let there arise from you a group of people inviting to the good, enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong. Those will be the successful.» [2]

This *Da'wah* has two fundamental aspects:

(a) *Tasfiyah*: Cleansing and purifying the *Islām*ic beliefs and practices.

(b) *Tarbiyah*: Guiding and educating the people according to the purified teachings.

Allāh (ﷻ) indicates that this was the Prophet's (ﷺ) message:

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ، يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ﴾ الجمعة ٢

«It is He who has sent among the unlettered a Messenger from themselves reciting to them His *āyāt*,

1 Muslim and others have recorded from Jābir Bin 'Abdillāh (رضي الله عنه) that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) used to start his speeches with this paragraph.

2 *Āl 'Imrān* 3:104.

purifying them, and teaching them the Book and Wisdom — although they were before in clear deviation.» [1]

This is also an obligation on every Muslim according to his ability, as Allāh (ﷻ) commands:

﴿وَتَعَاوَنُوا۟ عَلَى ٱلْبِرِّ وَٱلتَّقْوَىٰ، وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا۟ عَلَى ٱلْإِثْمِ وَٱلْعُدْوَٰنِ﴾ المائدة ٢

«Help one another in righteousness and piety; and do not help one another in sinning and transgression.» [2]

Our mission is then to propagate the *Islām*ic teachings in various areas as follows:

1. Correcting Our Beliefs and Practices

We should revere, study, comprehend, and implement the noble *Qurān* and the Prophet's authentic *Sunnah* in accordance with the understanding and practice of the righteous *salaf*: the *ṣaḥābah* and their true followers, who are described in the following:

﴿وَٱلسَّـٰبِقُونَ ٱلْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُهَـٰجِرِينَ وَٱلْأَنصَارِ وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُوهُم بِإِحْسَـٰنٍ رَّضِىَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا۟ عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّـٰتٍ تَجْرِى تَحْتَهَا ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ خَـٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا، ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ۝﴾ التوبة ١٠٠

«The first to embrace *Islām* among the *Muhājirūn* and the *Anṣār*, and also those who followed them in the best way — Allāh is pleased with them and they with Him. He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow: They will abide therein forever. This is the supreme success.» [3]

1 *Al-Jumu'ah* 62:2.

2 *Al-Mā'idah* 5:2.

3 *At-Tawbah* 9:100.

Thus, the guidance of the *salaf* is the only true guidance. Furthermore, the beliefs of the *ṣaḥābah* are the only acceptable beliefs:

﴿فَإِنْ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِمِثْلِ مَآ ءَامَنتُم بِهِۦ فَقَدِ ٱهْتَدَوا۟﴾ البقرة ١٣٧

«So if they believe as you believe [1], they are indeed truly guided.» [2]

Allāh warns against following any guidance other than the Messenger's (ﷺ) and his companions (ﷺ):

﴿وَمَن يُشَاقِقِ ٱلرَّسُولَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ ٱلْهُدَىٰ، وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ، نُوَلِّهِۦ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ، وَنُصْلِهِۦ جَهَنَّمَ، وَسَآءَتْ مَصِيرًا۝﴾ النساء ١١٥

«Whoever opposes the Messenger, after guidance has become clear to him, and follows other than the way of the believers [3], We will give him what he has chosen and let him into Hell: What an evil destination!» [4]

2. Inviting to the True *Dīn*

We should contribute to educating and guiding the Muslims to adopt the true *Dīn*, act according to its teachings, and adorn themselves with its virtues and ethics.

We should also contribute to inviting the non-Muslims to the unadulterated truth of *Islām*.

This is the only way for any person to attain Allāh's acceptance and achieve happiness and glory. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

1 The address in this *āyah* is to the *ṣaḥābah* (ﷺ).

2 *Al-Baqarah* 2:137.

3 The description "believers" here applies first and foremost to the *ṣaḥābah* (ﷺ).

4 *An-Nisā* 4:115.

﴿وَٱلْعَصْرِ ۝ إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنَ لَفِى خُسْرٍ ۝ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّـٰلِحَـٰتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا۟ بِٱلْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا۟ بِٱلصَّبْرِ ۝﴾ العصر ١-٣

«By time, the human being is surely in loss, except for those who believe, do righteous deeds, enjoin upon one another the keeping to truth, and enjoin upon one another patience (in adversity).» [1]

3. Warning Against Deviant Beliefs and Practices

We should caution the Muslims and exhort them against any beliefs or practices alien to the pure teachings of *Islām*, such as *shirk* and *bid'ah*.

4. Purifying the Sunnah

We should contribute to cleansing the *Sunnah* of weak and fabricated narrations. Wrong beliefs and practices deriving from weak reports have marred the beauty of *Islām* and prevented the Muslims' advancement.

The duty of purifying the *Sunnah* is so vital that the Messenger (ﷺ) praised those who perform it by saying:

«يحمل هذا العلم من كل خلف عدوله، ينفون عنه تحريفَ الغالين، وانتحالَ المبطلين، وتأويلَ الجاهلين»

‹This knowledge will be carried by the trustworthy ones of every generation — they will expel from it the alterations made by those going beyond bounds, the false claims of the liars, and the false interpretations of the ignorant.› [2]

---

1 *Al-'Asr* 103:1-3.

2 Recorded by Ibn 'Adiyy, al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī, Ibn 'Asākir, and others. It is reported from a number of *sahābah* including Abū Hurayrah, Ibn Mas'ūd, and Anas (ﷺ). All of its reports have various levels of weakness, but they add up collectively to make this *hadīth hasan*, as is indicated by al-Albānī in *Mishkāt ul-Masābīh* (no. 248), and as expressed by al-Halabī in *al-Hittah* (p. 70).

5. Liberating the *Islāmic* Thought

Guided by the *Islām*ic principles, we should contribute to reviving the unobstructed *Islām*ic thought and opposing stubborn adherence to *mathhabs* and prejudiced loyalty to parties. Neglecting this in the past has caused rust to dwell on the hearts and minds of Muslims, diverting them from the pure original sources of *Islām*, and causing them to deviate from the honest *Islām*ic brotherhood called to by Allāh (ﷻ):

﴿وَٱعْتَصِمُوا۟ بِحَبْلِ ٱللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا۟﴾ آل عمران ١٠٣

«And hold fast, all together, by the rope of Allāh, and be not divided among yourselves.» [1]

And by His Messenger (ﷺ):

«وكونوا، عبادَ اللّه، إخوانا»

‹Be, worshippers of Allāh, brothers.› [2]

6. Presenting the *Islāmic* Solution

We should contribute to providing realistic *Islām*ic solutions to contemporary problems, and strive toward resuming a true *Islām*ic way of life and establishing a true *Islām*ic society governed by Allāh's law. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَأَنِ ٱحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ﴾ المائدة ٤٩

«Hence, judge between them in accordance with what Allāh has revealed, and do not follow their errant views.» [3]

We call upon all the Muslims to support us in carrying out this

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1 *Āl 'Imrān* 3:103.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

3 *Al-Mā'idah* 5:49.

noble trust. This will surely elevate and honor them and spread the eternal message of *Islām* all over the earth, as is Allāh's true promise:

﴿هُوَ ٱلَّذِي أَرۡسَلَ رَسُولَهُۥ بِٱلۡهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ ٱلۡحَقِّ لِيُظۡهِرَهُۥ عَلَى ٱلدِّينِ كُلِّهِۦ وَلَوۡ كَرِهَ ٱلۡمُشۡرِكُونَ﴾ الصف ٩

«It is He who has sent His Messenger with Guidance and the Religion of Truth, in order to make it prevail over all (false) religion, however hateful this may be to the pagans.» [1]

Conclusion

This work is, therefore, a humble response to our realization of a great responsibility: the responsibility to help bring forth before the English-speaking public writings that refine *Islām* and present it pure and simple, as close as possible to the way it was understood and practiced by its early righteous pioneers — the *salaf*.

Technicalities

Transliteration

We have made a serious attempt to restrict the use of transliterated Arabic terms to the following two situations:

a) There is no English expression that can reflect the same meaning as the original term.

b) The Arabic term is of such importance that it is essential to familiarize the readers with it.

At the end of this book, we have included a glossary defining common Arabic terms that fulfill the above criteria. In addition, we

[1] *Aṣ-Ṣaff* 61:9.

have included an index of the Arabic terms that are more pertinent to this current work, indicating the page on which they have been defined.

Except for proper nouns, transliterated Arabic terms are *italic*ized. In general, the rules of English pronunciation can be applied. The following table includes additional symbols employed in this book to help pronounce the Arabic terms.

Symbol	Stands for	English Equivalent Sounds
ā, Ā	(ا) *Alif* (long vowel a)	Mostly: Man, sad. At times: Father, hard, god.
ū, Ū	(و) *Wāw* (long vowel u)	Root, soup, flute.
ī, Ī	(ي) *Yā* (long vowel i)	Seed, lean, piece, receive.
ʼ	(ء) *Hamzah*	The first consonant vocal sound uttered when saying: at, it or oh.
Th, th	(ث) *Thā*	Three, moth.
Ḥ, ḥ	(ح) *Ḥā*	No equivalent. Produced in the lower throat, below "h". Resembles the sound produced after swallowing.
Kh, kh	(خ) *Khā*	No equivalent. Produced in the back of the mouth and top of the throat.
Th, th (underlined)	(ذ) *Thāl* (underlined)	There, mother.
Ṣ, ṣ	(ص) *Ṣād*	A deeper "s" sound. Somewhat close to the "sc" in "muscle".
Ḍ, ḍ	(ض) *Ḍād*	Sounds deeper than a "d". Produced by touching the tongue to the mouth's roof.
Ṭ, ṭ	(ط) *Ṭah*	Similar but deeper than a "t".

Symbol	Stands for	English Equivalent Sounds
Ẓ ẓ	(ظ) Ẓah	A deeper *thāl*, produced by touching the tip of the tongue to the back of the front teeth.
ʿ	(ع) ʿAyn	Produced in the bottom of the throat, underneath "ḥ".
Gh, gh	(غ) Ghayn	A gurgling sound produced in the back of the mouth, just above the *khā*. Similar to the "R" in some french accents.
Q, q	(ق) Qāf	Somewhat similar to the "c" in "coffee".

Translating and Referencing *Qur'ān* and *Hadīth*

The *Qur'ān* contains Allāh's exact words. These words cannot be exactly translated into other languages because of possible misinterpretations and limited human understanding. It is best to translate the meanings as understood by the Muslim scholars. This is what is attempted here. When an *āyah* is cited, the Arabic text is quoted first, followed, between double angle quotation marks («»), by the English meaning in **boldface**. The meaning is extracted from books of *tafsīr* and from accessible translations.

The location of a *Qur'ān*ic citation is specified in a footnote. It provides the name of the *sūrah* followed by its number and the number(s) of the *āyah*(s) cited.

Similarly, when we cite a *hadīth*, we provide the Arabic text for the Prophet's (ﷺ) words, and follow that by its meaning, in **boldface**, between single angle quotation marks (‹›).

A footnote normally specifies the location of a cited *hadīth* in the *Hadīth* compilations. The footnote indicates as well its degree of authenticity and the names of scholars who made such judgement. A *hadīth* narrated by al-Bukhārī or Muslim is automatically considered authentic.

Notable Utterances

Out of love, appreciation, gratitude and other noble feelings, a Muslim is encouraged to utter certain phrases at the mention of Allāh, His messengers, the angels, the *ṣaḥābah*, or other righteous Muslims. We present these phrases in condensed Arabic calligraphy as follows:

Phrase	Mentioned with	Transliteration	Meaning
ﷻ	Allāh's Name	*Subḥānahū wa taʿālā.*	He is exalted above weakness and indignity.
ﷻ	Allāh's Name	*ʿAzza wa-jall.*	May He be hallowed and glorified.
ﷻ	Allāh's Name	*Jalla jalāluh.*	May His glory be hallowed.
ﷺ	Muḥammad and other prophets	*Ṣalla 'Llāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* [1].	May Allāh's peace and praise be on him.
ؑ	Prophets and angels	*ʿAlayh is-Salām.*	Peace be on him.
ؓ	A male companion	*Raḍiya 'Llāhu ʿanhu.*	May Allāh be pleased with him.
ؓ	A female companion	*Raḍiya 'Llāhu ʿanhā.*	May Allāh be pleased with her.
ؓ	Two companion	*Raḍiya 'Llāhu ʿanhumā.*	May Allāh be pleased with them.

[1] Uttering this is sometimes described as, "saying *ṣalāh* upon the Messenger".

Phrase	Mentioned with	Transliteration	Meaning
[illegible]	More than two companions	*Radiya 'Llāhu 'anhum.*	May Allāh be pleased with them.
[illegible]	A past scholar or righteous Muslim.	*Raḥimahu 'Llāh.*	May Allāh have mercy on him.

When coming across any of these symbols, the reader is advised to utter the complete phrase in order to obtain the reward of saying the appropriate *thikr* or *du'ā'*.

PREFACE

With Allāh's (ﷻ) blessings and facilitation, our practice has been to present to the readers materials that clarify the *Sunnah* in the most authentic and simple way. In line with this, we tackle in this book a subject that is largely misunderstood, though much needed by the Muslims, both in *Ramaḍān* and around the year: that of the voluntary night prayers.

This Book

This book is, for the most part, a close translation of two works by the prominent scholar Muḥammad Nāṣir ud-Dīn al-Albānī, namely, *Ṣalāt ut-Tarāwīḥ* and *Qiyāmu Ramaḍān*.

Al-Albānī states in his introduction to the latter book that it is mostly a summary of the earlier:

> "Our book *Ṣalāt ut-Tarāwīḥ* was printed quite a while ago, and the need has now arisen to reprint it. In terms of the style in which it was written, that book has fulfilled its goals — most importantly, alerting the common people to the correct *Sunnah* regarding the *tarāwīḥ* prayers, and refuting those who rejected it. By that, this *sunnah* spread in many *masjid*s in Syria, Jordan, and other Muslim countries — all praise is due to Allāh (ﷻ) with Whose blessing all good deeds are accomplished. Thus, I decided to abridge that book in a purely scholarly style, without including any of the refutations, in accordance with the saying, 'Say your peace and go.' I summarized all of the scholarly concepts in the original book, and added others to them for additional benefit. It is Allāh (ﷻ) that we ask to benefit people with it, as he did with the previous one, and to reward me for it, He is the most generous one to

ask."

However, there still are many important discussions and concepts present in the earlier book but omitted in the later. Because of this, we felt that it is important to present the English reader with a combined book, preserving the discussions of both works, omitting redundancies, and rearranging the material for a better flow of ideas.

Furthermore, we found it necessary to supplement al-Albānī's works with additional material, especially in sections or chapters where his discussions were brief or sketchy.

Work Done in this Book

From the above, it is clear that this book has two main goals:

a. Provide a complete manual on the subject of *qiyām* and related issues.

b. Present the reader with two important works by the great scholar al-Albānī.

In order to fulfill both goals, and at the same time keep the book in a presentable and easy to understand format for the readers, we applied the following steps:

1. Both works by al-Albānī were completely translated. This was especially pain-staking in the case of the earlier work, because of its extensive and specialized discussions of *Hādīth* issues.

2. Sections that constitute personal refutations of a specific person or group of people were omitted.

3. The two books were combined.

4. The material was reorganized so as to flow in a logical manner. In the process, numerous headings and subheadings were introduced to help the readers quickly find any specific topic of interest.

5. Redundant concepts, discussions, or reports were omitted — except in some cases, where the repetition was considered warranted. In many cases, cross referencing was applied to reports appearing in various parts of this book.

6. Analysis of the authenticity of narrations was moved from the main text to footnotes. This was not always possible, as some of the sections only deal with such analysis. On the other hand, all other explanatory remarks were moved from the footnotes to the main text.

7. Footnotes and commentaries were added to explain specialized terms from *'Ilm ul-Ḥādīth* or other *Islām*ic terms and concepts.

8. Other materials were added to supplement the material in those two works. However, to keep al-Albānī's works distinctive, alerting footnotes were placed next to the titles of chapters or sections where major portions are added — namely, Chapters 2, 3, 7, and 8, and the first and last sections of Chapter 6. The main sources consulted for the additional materials are provided with the References at the end of this book.

In addition to the above, we have done the following in the Second Edition of this book:

9. Introduced the Arabic text for all of the Prophet's (ﷺ) statements.

10. Included additional *ḥadīth*s, reports, and explanations to clarify or enhance some parts of the discussion.

11. Included precise reference to al-Albānī's verifications of various reports. If no such reference is provided in some cases, it simply means that his complete verification is part of the translated material.

12. Corrected typos and mistakes in the First Edition, and added various "cosmetic" enhancements, such as the table in Chapter 6 summarizing the various manners of praying *qiyām*.

Acknowledgements

All praise and thanks are due to our Lord (ﷻ) for facilitating the completion of this work. Deep appreciation and gratitude is due to the large number of Muslims who helped and supported this effort in various ways — may Allāh (ﷻ) reward them all. In particular, I would like to express appreciation of the great help provided by two persons:

a) Abū Khalīl al-Amrīkī, who helped translate a portion of the later book of al-Albānī, patiently reviewed the manuscript of this work, and provided important suggestions.

b) ʿAbdullāh al-Jibālī, who helped with the book's layout, typed most of the Arabic text, and designed the cover.

We ask Allāh (ﷻ) to make this humble effort helpful and fruitful to the Muslims, forgive our shortcomings, purify our work from hypocrisy and conceit, and accept it from us.

Our Lord, forgive us and all of the believers, and bestow Your peace and praise upon our Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ).

Muhammad al-Jibali
19 *Jamādā al-Ūwlā* 1420 H
30 August 1999

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION [1]

The *Fitnah* of Ignorance

Tribulations are clearly rampant in our time and, indeed, among the worst of them is the *fitnah* of ignorance in regard to matters of the Religion. Ibn Masʿūd (رضي الله عنه) truthfully expressed:

«كيف أنتم إذا لبستكم فتنة يهرم فيها الكبير، ويربو فيها الصغير،
ويتخذها الناس سُنَّة، إذا تُرِك منها شيءٌ قيل: "تركت السنة"؟»

‹What will you do when an ordeal (of ignorance and deviation) prevails over you, so that the adults will reach old age, and the young will grow to adulthood; and the people will come to adopt it as *Sunnah*; and should one default in any part of it, it will be said that he breached the *Sunnah*?›

He (رضي الله عنه) was asked, "When will that come to happen?" He replied:

«إذا ذهبت علماؤكم، وكثرت قراؤكم، وقلت فقهاؤكم،
وكثرت أمراؤكم، وقلت أمناؤكم، والتُمست الدنيا
بعمل الآخرة، وتُفُقِّه لغير الدين.»

‹It will happen when your learned ones are gone; you will have many *Qurʾān*-reciters, but few with true understanding (of *Islām*), and many commanders, but few trustworthy ones. Worldly

1 This chapter is mostly translated from the introduction of al-Albānī's "*Qiyām Ramaḍān*".

gains will be sought through (religious) **deeds of the hereafter, and the religious knowledge will be sought for other than the sake of the Religion.›** [1]

This report, *mawqūf* [2] though it is, takes the status of *marfū'* [3] because it mentions matters of *ghayb* that cannot be known except through the Revelation.

In this hadith, we can see signs of the Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) prophethood and the truthfulness of his message. *Bid'ahs* are prevalent, and many Muslims are fervent in following them and calling others to them. Those who observe the *Sunnah* and oppose *bid'ahs* are considered extremists, followers of *bid'ahs*, and neglectors of the *Sunnah*! Their crime is their rejection of innovations and refusal to [illegible] to the deviation!

This happened to the followers of the *Sunnah* in many countries and lands. They revived the *sunnah* of praying the *tarāwīh* as eleven *rak'āt*, while maintaining outward serenity and submission, and [illegible] correct authentic *thikr* — all of which being neglected by most people who pray twenty *rak'āt*.

This caused a great disturbance and fury among those who have been brought up and nurtured upon *taqlīd* [4]. They severely attacked the followers of the *Sunnah* by speeches, sermons, and books — all of which mostly void of useful knowledge and reliable evidence, and full of curses and profanities. Such is the practice of the people of falsehood when they criticize the people of truth.

This will not stop or deter us from pursuing our noble mission of spreading the *Sunnah* far and wide, in all aspects of *Islām*, *in shā' Allāh*.

1 Recorded by ad-Dārimī with two *isnāds*, one of which is *sahīh* and the other *hasan*. It is also recorded by al-Hākim and Ibn 'Abd il-Barr in *Jāmi'u Bayān il-'Ilm* (*Qiyām Ramadān* p. 4).

2 A statement that appears to be a *sahābī*'s opinion or saying, without being clearly attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ).

3 A statement explicitly attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ).

4 [illegible] imitation of others.

Reason for Writing This Book [1]

Many authors have written books claiming that praying *tarāwīh* as twenty *rak'āt* is an established *sunnah* among the Muslims, and that, with the exception of Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq (ﷺ), all of the Rightly Guided *Khulafā'* were consistent in praying that number. They have further attributed innovation in the *Dīn* to 'Umar (ﷺ), because he gathered the people for praying *tarāwīh* in *jamā'ah*.

Therefore, we set out to prove that 'Umar did not innovate in this prayer — neither in regard to number nor to gathering the people for it. Rather, he was the best example of a believer who adhered closely to the *Sunnah* of his Prophet (ﷺ). It is incumbent that we clarify this truth to the people, so that they would not be misled by false claims against the Prophet (ﷺ), the Commander of the Believers 'Umar (ﷺ), or others among our righteous *salaf*.

Major Topics

The discussion in this book [2] centers around the *qiyām* prayer in general, and the number of its *rak'āt* in particular.

Number of *Rak'āt*

In terms of the number of *rak'āt* of *qiyām*, we will establish the following:

1. The Prophet (ﷺ) did not pray more than eleven *rak'āt* in *qiyām* (thirteen if we count the two short introductory *rak'āt*).

2. 'Umar (ﷺ) commanded Ubayy Bin Ka'b (ﷺ) and Tamīm ad-Dārī (ﷺ) to lead the people in *tarāwīh* with eleven *rak'āt*, in accordance with the authentic *Sunnah*.

1 This being a translation from al-Albānī's "*Qiyām Ramadān*", the reasons that he provides for writing that book are more limited and restricted than those for compiling this larger work — as we have indicated in the preface.

2 Please see the previous note.

3. All reports that the people at the time of 'Umar (ﷺ), or any of the noble ṣaḥābah, prayed twenty *rak'āt* are unauthentic and contradict the truly established reports. Similarly, all claims that the ṣaḥābah (ﷺ) have made an *ijmā'* (consensus) to pray twenty *rak'āt* are baseless.

4. Even if a weak report were considered authentic by some people, one should still follow the well established authentic report, because it agrees with the number established in the *Sunnah*. One can not desert the *Sunnah* for anybody's understanding or practice.

5. There is no doubt that it is best to follow the Prophet's (ﷺ) consistent practice. Therefore, one should adhere to the number established in the *Sunnah*, and refrain from adding to it.

6. Even if we concede to the often misquoted and misunderstood statement that, "There are good innovations," we must adhere to the consensus among the scholars that following *Sunnah* is better than any innovation. 'Abdullāh Bin Mas'ūd (ﷺ) said:

"الاقتصاد في السنّة خيرٌ من الاجتهاد في البدعة"

"Doing little according to the *Sunnah* is better than doing much in way of *bid'ah*." [1]

Other Topics

We also establish in this book that the Prophet's (ﷺ) *Sunnah* is to pray *tarāwīḥ* in *jamā'ah*, to pray it as eleven *rak'āt*, and that the *ṣaḥābah* agreed and followed the *Sunnah* in that regard.

Furthermore, we present the different manners in which the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed witr, the importance of devotion in the prayer, and many other useful hints and reminders throughout the book.

We ask Allāh (ﷻ) to guide us to the truth in what we have written

1 Recorded by al-Lālkā'ī, Ibn Naṣr (*As-Sunnah* p. 25), al-Bayhaqī (*Al-Kubrā* 3:19), ad-Dārimī, al-Ḥākim, and others. Verified to be authentic by Mashhūr Ḥasan Salmān (*Al-Amr bil-Ittibā'* p. 48).

here and elsewhere, to make this work pure and sincere for His glorious Face, and cause our believing brethren to benefit from it — indeed He is the most Generous and Merciful.

A Highly Rewardable Mission

We establish the above with clear proofs from the authentic *Sunnah* and trustworthy narrations. By this, we hope to deliver the teachings of the *Sunnah* to people, whether in regard to this or other issues, fulfilling by that the Prophet's (ﷺ) command:

«بلّغوا عني، ولو آية.»

‹Convey (the knowledge) from me — even as little as one *āyah*, ...› [1]

Those who understand this and adhere to it will be successful and happy in both lives, and will receive multiple rewards, *in shā'a 'Llāh*, because the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«من سنّ في الإسلام سنّةً حسنةً، فله أجرها، وأجر من عمل بها بعده، من غير أن ينقص من أجورهم شيءٌ.»

‹Whosoever establishes a good way in *Islām*, he gets a reward for this, and a reward equal to that of each one who follows him into it — until the day of judgement — without reducing any of their rewards.› [2]

As for those who are not convinced by our discussions, because of some doubts that they could not clarify, there is no blame on them, because what applies to them applies equally to many great scholars in regard to those issues.

As for those who reject the truth because of *hawā* (desires), or

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Aḥmad, and at-Tirmidhī from 'Abdullāh Bin 'Amr (ﷺ).

2 Recorded by Muslim and others.

passion to adhere to the way of their parents and grandparents. Allāh (ﷻ) is their judge.

In all cases, we seek by this Allāh's (ﷻ) help, facilitation, and acceptance — He is All Hearing and Answering.

CHAPTER 2

QIYĀM [1]

Qiyām, Tarāwīḥ, and *Witr*

Definitions

Qiyām means "standing"; and *qiyām ul-layl* means "standing at night". In the *shar'* context, both terms refer to the same thing, namely, the voluntary night prayer whose time extends from after *'ishā'* prayer until dawn. It is described as "standing" because it involves long standing in which long portions of *Qur'ān* are recited.

Other common names for it are: *ṣalāt ul-layl* (the night prayer), *tahajjud* (from *hajada*: remained awake at night), *witr* (odd-numbered), and *tarāwīḥ* (resting). [2]

Witr in particular has two different meanings in the *Sunnah*, and both will be used in this book. It usually refers to the last one or three *rak'āt* of *qiyām*. But it sometimes means all of the night prayers because, collectively, they are odd numbered.

Misconceptions

Some people think that *tahajjud* is a night prayer different from *qiyām* or *tarāwīḥ*. Others think that *nafl* prayers at night are only recommended during *Ramaḍān*.

Thus it is important to clarify these misunderstandings, and emphasize what was mentioned above, i.e., that there is only one *nafl* prayer at night, with different names used to describe it. Even though *tarāwīḥ* is most commonly used to describe it in *Ramaḍān*, this does not make it a different prayer.

Furthermore, in some counties and *masjid*s, mostly during the

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1 For the most part, this chapter is not from the two translated works of al-Albānī.

2 Definitions from: *Lisān ul-'Arab* under "*Hajada*" and "*Rawaḥa*".

second half of Ramaḍān, people pray *tarāwīḥ* early in the night, and then pray another prayer that they call *tahajjud* at the end of the night. This practice is a *bid'ah* that has no basis in the practice of the *salaf*.

Tarāwīḥ

From the earliest times, the Muslims have used the name *tarāwīḥ* to describe the night prayers of *Ramaḍān*. Most scholars allow using this name, but some have reservations because it carries the implication that one must rest after every four *rak'āt* of *tarāwīḥ* — a thing that has no basis in the *Sunnah*. According to Muḥammad Shaqrah:

> "The reason for this name is that, due to long recitation, the people used to rest after every four *rak'āt*. This rest became a necessary element of *tarāwīḥ*, even with very short recitations. This led people to think that this is a correct name revealed to Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ).
>
> It is important to clarify that this name is wrong both in text and meaning. As for text, it is not known that the Prophet (ﷺ) gave it this name, nor any of his companions ... And as for meaning, it is not known that the Prophet (ﷺ) taught his companions to rest after every four *rak'āt*.
>
> Thus, it should be brought to the attention of people that this is a novel name. It is better to use the name that the Prophet (ﷺ) used for this prayer: *qiyām* ...
>
> One might ask, 'Is it wrong to rest after finishing two or four *rak'āt*?' My answer is, 'If the *imām* gets tired, or feels that the people praying behind him are tired from long standing and recitation, he may allow some rest ...' "[1]

The Excellence of Qiyām

There are many *āyāt* and *ḥadīths* proclaiming the excellence of *qiyām*

1 *Irshād us-Sārī* (p. 75-77).

and the merit of those who perform it consistently.

A Practice of the Believers

Allāh (ﷻ) indicates that praying at night is a practice of the believers who deserve *Jannah*:

﴿تَتَجَافَىٰ جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ ٱلْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَـٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ۝﴾ السجدة ١٦

«Their (the believers') sides forsake their beds, to invoke their Lord in fear and hope; and they spend out of what We bestowed on them.» [1]

Allāh (ﷻ) also says:

﴿كَانُوا قَلِيلاً مِّنَ ٱللَّيْلِ مَا يَهْجَعُونَ۝﴾ الذاريات ١٧

«They (the pious ones) used to sleep but little at night...» [2]

In addition, there are numerous *ḥadīths* on this subject. In what follows we present a selection of the most common ones.

The Best of Voluntary Prayers

The night prayers are the best of voluntary prayers. Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«أفضل الصلاة بعد الصلاة المكتوبة الصلاة في جوف الليل.»

‹The best of prayers, after those prescribed, are those prayed in the depth of night.› [3]

1 *As-Sajdah* 32:16.

2 *Ath-Thāriyāt* 51:17.

3 Recorded by Muslim and Aḥmad.

Protection from Satan's Magic

Satan strives to keep us away from Allāh (ﷻ) and His remembrance. He places a strong spell upon each person's head when he goes to sleep. Getting up for the night prayers disables Satan's spells and annuls his magic. Abū Hurayrah (ؓ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«يعقد الشَّيطان على قافية رأس أحدكم إذا نام ثلاث عقد، يضرب

على كل عقدة: عليك ليل طويل فارقد. فإن استيقظ فذكر الله

انحلت عقدة، فإن توضّأ انحلت عقدة، فإن صلّى انحلت عقدة،

فأصبح نشيطًا طيِّب النَّفس، وإلاَّ أصبح خبيث النفس، كسلان.»

‹When one of you goes to sleep, Satan ties three knots over the rear of his head, blowing into each knot, "You have a long night, so sleep on." If one wakes up and mentions Allāh, one knot loosens. If he makes *wuḍū'*, another knot loosens. And if he prays, the third knot loosens, so that he becomes lively and good-natured; otherwise, he gets up ill-natured and lazy.› [1]

Sign of Gratitude

Getting up for the night prayers is an important sign of gratitude for Allāh's infinite favors upon us. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) practiced this in the finest manner.

Al-Mughīrah (ؓ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) used to stand in prayer for so long that his feet swelled. He was asked, "Why should you do this, O Allāh's Messenger, when all of your sins, past and future, have been forgiven?" He replied:

«أفلا أكون عبداً شكوراً.»

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

‹Should I not be a grateful servant (of Allāh)?› [1]

Similarly, when ʿĀ'ishah (ؓ) saw that the Prophet's (ﷺ) long standing in prayer caused his feet to crack, she asked him, "Why should you do this, O Allāh's Messenger, when all of your sins, past and future, have been forgiven?" He (ﷺ) gave her the same response as above. [2]

Sign of Goodness

Consistency in the night prayers is an important trait of goodnesss and righteousness for a believer. ʿAbdullāh Bin ʿUmar (ؓ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«نعم الرجل عبد اللَّه، لو كان يصلِّي من اللَّيل.»

‹ʿAbdullāh (Bin ʿUmar) would indeed be an excellent man if he prayed at night.›

ʿAbdullāh's son, Sālim, reported that after the Prophet (ﷺ) said this, his father would not sleep at night but very little. [3]

Means of Entering *Jannah*

Praying at night is one of the simple and effective means of entering *Jannah*. ʿAbdullāh Bin Salām (ؓ) reported that the first thing that he heard from the Prophet (ﷺ) when he (ؓ) entered al-Madīnah was:

«أيُّها النَّاس أفشوا السَّلام وأطعموا الطَّعام وصلُّوا

باللَّيل والناس نيام، تدخلوا الجنَّة بسلام.»

‹O people! Spread (the greeting of) *salām*, provide food (to the needy), and pray at night while the people are asleep — you would then enter *Jannah*

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

with peace.›[1]

Acceptance of Supplications

When a Muslim gets up late at night for prayer and supplication, his supplications stand a great chance of being accepted. Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«ينزل ربُّنا تبارك وتعالى كلَّ ليلة إلى السَّماء الدنيا حين يبقى ثلث الليل الآخر، يقول: "من يدعوني فأستجيب له؟ من يسألني فأعطيه، من يستغفرني فأغفر له؟"»

‹Our Lord (ﷻ) descends every night to the lowest heaven, when only one third of the night has remained. He says, "Who would invoke Me, so that I would answer him? Who would ask Me, so that I would give him? Who would seek My forgiveness, so that I would forgive him?›[2]

In one of the reports, he adds:

«ثمَّ يبسط يديه ويقول: "من يقرض غير عدوم ولا ظلوم؟" حتى ينفجر الفجر»

‹Then Allāh extends His hand and says, "Who wants to invest (good deeds) with the One who is not wasteful or unjust?" He continues to say this until the dawn arrives.›[3]

Jābir (ﷺ) reported that he heard the Prophet (ﷺ) say:

1 Recorded by at-Tirmithi. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Sahih ut-Targhīb wat-Tarhib* no. 610&937).
2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
3 Recorded by Muslim.

«إنَّ في الليل لساعة، لا يوافقها عبد مسلم، يسأل الله فيها خيراً من أمر الدنيا والآخرة، إلاَّ أعطاه إيَّاه، وذلك كل ليلة.»

‹There is an hour of the night which, no Muslim person encounters it and asks for a good thing in this life or the hereafter, but Allāh grants it to him. This happens every night.›[1]

Abū Umāmah (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) was asked, "When are supplications most acceptable?" He replied:

«جوف الليل الآخر ودبر الصَّلوات المكتوبات.»

‹In the last depth of night, and at the end of the prescribed prayers.›[2]

Mu'āth Bin Jabal (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ما من مسلم يبيت على ذكر طاهرًا فيتعارّ من الليل فيسأل الله خيرًا من الدُّنيا والآخرة إلاَّ أعطاه إياه.»

‹Whenever a Muslim goes to bed in a pure state (with *wuḍū'*), falls asleep while mentioning Allāh, and then wakes up during the night, and asks Allāh for anything good, He grants it to him.›[3]

Closeness of Allāh

Getting up for prayer during the last part of the night brings a person close to his Lord (ﷻ). 'Amr Bin 'Abasah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

1 Recorded by Muslim and Aḥmad.
2 Recorded by at-Tirmithī. It is *hasan* according to him as well as al-Albānī (*Sahīh Sunan at-Tirmithī* no. 2782).
3 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and Ibn Mājah. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Sahīh ul-Jāmi'* no. 5754).

«أقرب ما يكون الرَّبُّ من العبد في جوف الليل الآخر، فإن

استطعت أن تكون ممَّن يذكر اللهَ في تلك الساعة فكن»

‹The closest that a servant is to his Lord is in the last part of night. If you can be among those who remember Allāh at that hour, do so.› [1]

Mercy from Allāh

Allāh's mercy engulfs a Muslim who gets up at night to pray and wakes up his spouse for prayer as well. Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«رحم اللَّه رجلاً قام من الليل فصلّى، وأيقظ امرأته فصلّت. فإن

أبت نضح في وجهها الماءَ. رحم الله امرأة قامت من الليل فصلّت،

وأيقظت زوجها فصلّى، فإن أبى نضحت في وجهه الماء»

‹May Allāh have mercy on a man who wakes up at night, prays, and wakes his wife to pray; and if she refuses, he sprinkles water on her face. And may Allāh have mercy on a woman who wakes up at night, prays, and wakes her husband to pray; and if he refuses, she sprinkles water on his face.› [2]

Among the Most Righteous

Praying at least two *rak'āt* at night gives a Muslim the status of those who frequently remember Allāh. Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (ﷺ) and Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

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1 Recorded by at-Tirmidhi, an-Nasā'ī, and al-Hākim. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Sahīh al-Jāmi'* no. 1173).

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā'ī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Sahīh al-Jāmi'* no. 3494).

«إذا أيقظ الرجل أهله من الليل فصلّيا أو صلّى ركعتين جميعًا،

كتبا في الذاكرين والذاكرات.»

‹When a man wakes his wife at night, and they pray two *rak'āt* together, they are recorded among the men and women who frequently remember Allāh.› [1]

The more that one recites of the *Qur'ān* in his night prayers, the higher is his status and the worthier are his records. 'Abdullāh Bin 'Amr (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«من قام بعشر آيات لم يكتب من الغافلين، ومن قام بمائة

آية كتب من القانتين، ومن قام بألف آية كتب من المقنطرين.»

‹Whoever prays *qiyām* reciting ten *āyāt*, he will not be recorded among the negligent. Whoever prays *qiyām* reciting one hundred *āyāt*, he will be recorded among the devout. And whoever prays *qiyām* reciting one thousand *āyāt*, he will be recorded among those with a multitude of good deeds.› [2]

Miscellaneous Etiquettes

Many of the etiquettes applicable to the night prayers are presented in the forthcoming chapters — especially the next. In what follows we mention a few additional etiquettes for the sake of completeness.

1. Constancy

It is important to maintain a regular number and length of *qiyām*. That would be far better than praying an extremely long prayer one night

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1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Mājah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Sahīh ut-Targhīb wat-Tarhīb* no. 620).

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Hibbān, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*as-Sahīhah* no. 642).

and skipping several nights.

ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«أحبُّ الأعمال إلى الله تعالى أدومها وإن قل.»

‹The most beloved deeds to Allāh are the most constant, even if they were little.› [1]

Also, Masrūq reported that he asked ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها), "Which deeds were most beloved to Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ)?" She replied, "The constant ones." He asked, "And when did Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) get up (to pray) at night?" She replied, "He used to get up when he heard the rooster's crow." [2]

Constancy helps maintain the deeds in a regular manner, whereas deeds that come in big bursts tend to fade away quickly. ʿAbdullāh Bin ʿAmr (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said to him:

«يا عبد الله، لا تكون مثل فلان، كان يقوم من الليل فترك قيام الليل»

‹O ʿAbdullāh, do not be like so and so. He used to pray at night, then he stopped doing it.› [3]

ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) said:

"Do not ever stop praying *qiyām*. The Prophet (ﷺ) never ceased praying it. When he was sick or weak, he prayed sitting." [4]

And she said:

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
4 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and Ibn Khuzaymah. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (Ṣaḥīḥ at-Targhīb wat-Tarhīb no. 626).

"When the Prophet (ﷺ) grew old and weak, he mostly prayed (at night) while sitting." [1]

2. Mentioning Allāh Upon Rising from Bed

The first thing to do when getting up from sleep is mentioning Allāh. There are many *ḥadīth*s reporting things that the Prophet (ﷺ) said when he got up at night. In the following we list a few of them.

ʿUbādah Bin aṣ-Ṣāmit (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«من تعارَّ من الليل فقال حين يستيقظ: "لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريكَ له، له المُلك، وله الحمدُ، يحيي ويميت، بيده الخير وهو على كلِّ شيءٍ قديرٌ، وسُبحانَ الله، والحمدُ لله، ولا إله إلا الله، والله أكبرُ، ولا حولَ ولا قوةَ إلا بالله، ربِّ اغفرْ لي." ثم دعا استجيب له، فإن قام فتوضأ ثم صلّى قبلت صلاته.»

‹Whoever wakes up at night and says:
***"Lā ilāha illallāhu waḥdahū lā sharīka lahū, lah ul-mulku wa-lah ul-ḥamdu, yuḥyī wa-yumīt, bi-yadih il-khayr, wa-huwa ʿalā kulli shay'in qadīr. Wa-subḥān allāhi, wal-ḥamdu lillāhi, wa-lā ilāha illāllāhu, wallāhu akbaru, wa-lā ḥawla wa-lā quwwata illā billāh, rabb ighfir lī."* —**
"There is no (true) god except Allāh, alone without any partners. To Him belongs the sovereignty; and to Him belongs all praise. He gives life and death, in His Hand is all good, and He is capable of everything. Exalted is Allāh; all praise be to Allāh; there is no (true) god except Allāh; Allāh is the Greatest; there is no power or might except from Allāh. My Lord! Forgive me."
Anyone who says this then supplicates, his supplication will be answered; and if he performs

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

wuḍū' then prays his prayer will be accepted.› [1]

Rabī'ah Bin Ka'b al-Aslamī (رضي الله عنه) reported that he used to sleep by the house of the Prophet (ﷺ). When he (ﷺ) got up at night, he would hear him repeat for a long time:

«سُبحانَ ربِّ العالمين»

‹*Subḥāna rabb il-'ālamīn* — **Exalted is the Lord of the creation**›

Then he (ﷺ) would repeat for a long time:

«سُبحانَ اللهِ وبحمدِه»

‹*Subḥānallāhi wa bi-ḥamdih* — **Exalted is Allāh, all praise belongs to Him**› [2]

Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) reported that one night he slept in his aunt Maymūnah's (رضي الله عنها) house when the Prophet (ﷺ) was there (for her turn). The Prophet (ﷺ) chatted with his wife for a while, and then slept. When it was the last one-third of the night or shortly thereafter, the Prophet (ﷺ) sat up, looked at the sky, and recited the following *āyāt* at the end of the *sūrah*:

﴿إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱخْتِلَٰفِ ٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ لَأَيَٰتٍ لِّأُوْلِى ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ۝ ...﴾ آل عمران ١٩٠

«*Inna fī khalq is-samāwāti wal-arḍi wakhtilāf il-layli wan-nahāri la āyātil li ulil-albāb* ... — **Verily, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding ...**» [3]

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1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Aḥmad, and others.

2 Recorded by an-Nasā'ī, at-Tirmidhī, Abū 'Uwānah, and Muslim (in part). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāt* no. 1218).

3 Āl ʿImrān 3:190-200

He (ﷺ) then reached for the waterskin, untied its cap, poured water in a vessel, and performed a good and complete *wuḍū'* without being excessive (in using the water). The Prophet (ﷺ) then stood for prayer, and he (Ibn 'Abbās) got up, performed *wuḍū'*, and stood on his left side. He (ﷺ) held him with his ear and moved him to his right side. He completed thirteen *rak'āt* of prayer, then lied down and slept until his breathing became audible — as he used to do when he slept — until Bilāl came to announce that it is time for the (morning) prayer, upon which he (ﷺ) prayed without performing *wuḍū'*. Among what he (ﷺ) said in supplication (during the night prayers):

«اللهم اجعل في قلبي نوراً، وفي بصري نوراً، وفي سمعي نوراً، وفي لساني نوراً، وعن يميني نوراً، وعن يساري نوراً، وفوقي نوراً. وتحتي نوراً، وأمامي نوراً، وخلفي نوراً، واجعل لي نوراً.

«واجعل في نفسي نوراً، وأعْظِم لي نوراً.»

‹*Allāhum aj'al fī qalbī nūran, wa-fī baṣarī nūran, wa-fī sam'ī nūran, wa-fī lisānī nūran, wa-'an yamīnī nūran, wa-'an yasārī nūran, wa-fawqī nūran, wa-taḥtī nūran, wa-'amāmī nūran, wa-khalfī nūran, wa-j'al lī nūran, wa-j'al fī nafsī nūran, wa-'a'ẓim lī nūran* — **O Allāh! Place light in my heart, light in my eyesight, light in my hearing, light in my tongue, light on my right, light on my left, light above me, light under me, light in front of me, and light behind me. Grant me light, place light in my soul, and make my light brilliant.**› [1]

3. Praying during The Last Part of the Night

The best time for praying *qiyām* is the last one-third of the night. This has been mentioned in several of the earlier *ḥadīths*. Furthermore, 'Abdullāh Bin 'Amr (رضي الله عنهما) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

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1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

«إنَّ أحبَّ الصِّيام إلى الله صيام داود، وأحبَّ الصَّلاة إلى الله صلاة داود، كان ينام نصف اللَّيل، ويقوم ثلثه، وينام سدسه، وكان يصوم يومًا ويفطر يومًا.»

‹The most beloved prayer to Allāh is Dāwūd's. He slept one half of the night, got up (and prayed) for one third, and then slept (the remaining) one sixth.› [1]

4. Ablution and Cleaning the Teeth

As soon as he got up, the Prophet (ﷺ) would brush his teeth with *siwāk* [2] and perform *wuḍū'*. A number of such reports, narrated by 'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) and Ibn 'Abbās (ﷺ), will be cited in Chapter 6. Furthermore, 'Alī (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إنَّ العبد إذا قام يصلِّي أتاه الملك فقام خلفه يستمع القرآن ويدنو، فلا يزال يستمع ويدنو حتى يضع فاه على فيه فلا يقرأ آية إلا كانت في جوف الملك.»

‹When one of you gets up to pray at night, let him use *siwāk* (to clean his teeth), because when he recites during the prayer, an angel puts his mouth over his, so that nothing leaving his mouth but will enter into the angel's mouth.› [3]

5. Praying with a Moderate Voice-Level

One may pray *qiyām* silently or aloud, but is best to raise his voice moderately. Abū Qatādah (ﷺ) reported that one night, the Prophet (ﷺ)

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1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

2 A stick cut from the roots of a desert tree called *arāk*, and used to clean the teeth; it is also called *miswāk*. The act of cleaning the teeth with *siwāk* is called *tasawwuk*.

3 Recorded by al-Bayhaqī, aḍ-Ḍiyā', and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī in *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1213.

saw Abū Bakr (ﷺ) praying with a low voice. He then saw 'Umar (ﷺ) praying with a loud voice. Afterwards, he (ﷺ) said to Abū Bakr, «يا أبا بكر، مررتُ بك وأنت تصلي تخفض صوتك.» **‹O Abū Bakr! I passed by you praying and lowering your voice.›** He replied, "I have been heard by Him whom I was privately addressing, O Allāh's Messenger!" Then the Prophet (ﷺ) said to 'Umar, «يا عمر، مررت بك وأنت تصلي رافعًا صوتك.» **‹O 'Umar! I passed by you praying and raising your voice.›** He replied, "O Allāh's Messenger! Thereby, I wake the sleepy and drive away Satan!" So the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«يا أبا بكر، ارفع من صوتك شيئًا. ويا عمر، اخفض من صوتك شيئًا.»

‹O Abū Bakr, Raise your voice a little. And you 'Umar, lower your voice a little.› [1]

Ibn 'Abbās (ﷺ) reported:

"The Prophet's (ﷺ) recitation (in *qiyām*) was such that one would hear him from the outer room while he is inside (in the bedroom)." [2]

The Excellence of *Qiyām* in *Ramaḍān*

There are many *ḥadīths* describing an additional merit for *qiyām* during the nights of *Ramaḍān*. In the following we present a few of them.

Forgiveness of Sins

Praying *qiyām* during *Ramaḍān*, if it is done with sincerity and according to the *Sunnah*, is a great means of atonement of sins. Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported:

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1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and at-Tirmithī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāt* no. 1204).

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and at-Tirmithī. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāt* no. 1203).

"Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) encouraged the people, without making it an absolute obligation, to perform *qiyām* during *Ramaḍān*. He used to say:

«من قام رمضان إيمانًا واحتسابًا، غفر له ما تقدم من ذنبه»

‹Whoever stands (in *qiyām*) in *Ramaḍān* out of faith and expectation (of Allāh's reward), all his previous sins will be forgiven.›

This continued until Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) passed, and during the *khilāfah* of Abū Bakr (رضي الله عنه) and a portion of that of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه)." [1]

A Most Virtuous Act

Praying *qiyām* during *Ramaḍān* is one of the acts that would bring a person to the status of the most righteous and the martyrs. 'Amr Bin Murrah al-Juhanī reported that a man from the tribe of Quḍā'ah said to the Messenger (ﷺ), "O Allāh's Messenger! What would be my status if I should testify that there is no (true) god except Allāh and that you are Allāh's Messenger, pray the five prayers, fast and pray *qiyām* in *Ramaḍān*, and give *zakāh*?" The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«من مات على هذا كان من الصديقين والشهداء»

‹Anyone dying upon this will be (in *Jannah*) among the most truthful and the martyrs.› [2]

1 Recorded by Muslim. The Prophet's words in this *ḥadīth* are in al-Bukhārī as well.

2 Recorded by Ibn Khuzaymah, Ibn Ḥibbān, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ut-Targhīb wat-Tarhīb* no. 355, 745, 989).

CHAPTER 3

LAYLAT UL-QADR [1]

Meaning

The words *qadr* and *qadar* mean decree; *qadr* also means majesty or high esteem. [2] Thus, *Laylat ul-Qadr*, or the Night of *Qadr*, means the Night of Decree, or the Night of Majesty.

Merits

Laylat ul-Qadr is a very blessed night. It is the best night of *Ramaḍān*, rather, the whole year. Rewards for acts of worship during it are multiplied so as to equal one thousand months'. It is the night that Allāh (ﷻ) chose to send the *Qur'ān* down to the lowest heaven, from where it was revealed in small portions to Muḥammad (ﷺ).

It is the night on which Allāh (ﷻ) decrees His wise ordainments, appointing matters of life, death, sustenance, disasters, etc; and the angels descend with these decrees.

Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ ۝ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ ۝ لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ ۝ تَنَزَّلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِم مِّن كُلِّ أَمْرٍ ۝ سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّىٰ مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ ۝﴾ القدر ١-٥

«Verily! We have sent this (the *Qur'ān*) down in the Night of *al-Qadr*. And what will make you know what the Night of *al-Qadr* is? The Night of *al-Qadr* is better than one thousand months. In it the angels

1 For the most part, this chapter is not from the two works of al-Albānī.

2 *Lisān ul-'Arab*.

and the Spirit (Jibrīl) descend, by Allāh's permission, with all decrees. Peace it is, until the appearance of dawn.» [1]

And He (ﷻ) says:

﴿إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ إِنَّا كُنَّا مُنْذِرِينَ ۝ فِيهَا يُفْرَقُ كُلُّ أَمْرٍ حَكِيمٍ ۝ أَمْرًا مِنْ عِنْدِنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا مُرْسِلِينَ ۝ رَحْمَةً مِنْ رَبِّكَ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ۝﴾ الدخان ٣-٦

«Verily! We have sent this (the *Qur'ān*) down on a blessed night. Verily, We always warn (the people). In it (that night), every matter of ordainment is decreed — by Our command. Verily, We always send (the messengers for guidance). It is a mercy from Your Lord; He is indeed All-Hearing, All-Knowing.» [2]

It should be noted here that sending down the *Qur'ān* on *Laylat ul-Qadr* does not mean that it was revealed all at once to Muhammad (ﷺ). According to the Scholars, it was sent down on that night from *al-Lawh ul-Mahfūz* (the Preserved Tablet) to the lowest heaven. It was then revealed in small segments, as necessary, over a period of twenty three years of the Messenger's (ﷺ) life. [3]

The same applies to Allāh's decrees. They are not formulated on this specific night every year. Rather, Allāh (ﷻ), with His encompassing knowledge, knew all what will happen, and has recorded it all in *al-Lawh ul-Mahfūz*. On *Laylat ul-Qadr*, Allāh (ﷻ) issues to the angels His decrees pertaining to the following year (life, death, sustenance, etc) — which had already been recorded in *al-Lawh ul-Mahfūz*. [4]

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1 *Al-Qadr* 97:1-5.

2 *Ad-Dukhān* 44:3-6.

3 This is recorded in the books of *Tafsīr* from Ibn ʻAbbās, Qatādah, Ibn Zayd, and others. Review, for example, Ibn Kathīr's and al-Qurṭubī's.

4 This meaning is recorded in the books of *Tafsīr* from Ibn ʻAbbās, Qatādah, Mujāhid,

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ليلةُ القدرِ ليلةُ سابعةٍ أو تاسعةٍ وعشرين،
إن الملائكةَ تلك الليلةَ في الأرضِ أكثرُ من عدد الحصى.»

‹*Laylat ul-Qadr* is the night of the twenty-seventh or twenty-ninth (of *Ramaḍān*). Indeed, during that night, the angels on earth are more than the numbers of pebbles.› [1]

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أتاكم شهر رمضان، شهرٌ مبارك، فرض اللهُ عليكم صيامه، تفتح فيه أبواب الجنة، وتغلق فيه أبواب الجحيم، وتُغلُّ فيه مردةُ الشياطين.
وفيه ليلةٌ هي خيرٌ من ألف شهر، من حُرِمَ خيرها فقد حُرِم.»

‹*Ramaḍān* has come to you, a blessed month that Allāh has ordained for you fasting it. During it, the gates of *Jannah* are opened, the gates of Hell are closed, and the rebellious devils are chained down. There is in it one night that is better than one thousand months. He who is denied its goodness is truly deprived (of goodness).› [2]

Abū Saʻīd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن هذا الشهرَ قد حضركم، وفيه ليلةٌ خيرٌ من ألف شهر.

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al-Hasan, and others. Review, for example, Ibn Kathīr's and al-Qurṭubī's.

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Khuzaymah, and others. Verified to be *hasan* by al-Albānī (*as-Saḥīḥah* no. 2205).

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, an-Nasā'ī, and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʻ* no. 55).

من حُرِمها فقد حُرم الخيرَ كلّه، ولا يُحرم خيرَها إلا محروم»

‹**This month (*Ramaḍān*) has come to you. There is in it one night that is better than one thousand months. He who is deprived of it is truly deprived of all good. And no one is deprived of its goodness but a deprived person.**›[1]

Which Night?

Varying Reports and Opinions

There are various authentic *ḥadīth*s in which the Prophet (ﷺ) indicates that *Laylat ul-Qadr* falls on the night[2] of the twenty first, twenty third, twenty fifth, twenty seventh, twenty ninth, or last night of *Ramaḍān*. Because of this, the scholars have differed widely as to which night it actually falls on. Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-ʿIrāqī wrote a booklet on this subject, titled "*Sharḥ uṣ-Ṣadr bi-Dhikri Laylat il-Qadr*", in which he covered all of the scholars' opinions in this regard. Imām ash-Shāfiʿī (رحمه الله) said:

> "It seems to me that the Prophet (ﷺ) would answer in accordance with the question. So if one asked him, 'Should we seek it on such and such night?' He would reply, 'Yes, seek it on such and such night.' "[3]

The Last Ten Nights of Ramaḍān

The various reports indicate that *Laylat ul-Qadr* definitely falls on the last ten nights of *Ramaḍān*, and most frequently on the last seven nights, as in Ibn ʿUmar's report that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

1 Recorded by Ibn Mājah. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ut-Targhīb wat-Tarhīb* no. 986).

2 "The night of the twenty-first" means the night preceding the twenty-first day of *Ramaḍān*.

3 Reported by al-Baghawī in *Sharḥ us-Sunnah* (6:388).

«التمسُوها في العشر الأواخر، فإن ضعف أحدكم أو عجز،

فلا يغلبنّ على السّبع البواقي.»

‹**Seek it on the last ten nights. If one of you is weak, let him not miss (at least) the last seven nights.**›[1]

The knowledge of the exact night on which it falls is hidden from the Muslims. ʿUbādah Bin aṣ-Ṣāmit (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) walked into the *Masjid* (Prophet's mosque) and found two men arguing. He said:

«خرجت لأخبركم بليلة القدر، فتلاحى فلان وفلان فرفعت، وعسى أن

يكون خيرًا لكم، فالتمسوها في التّاسعة، والسّابعة، والخامسة.»

‹**I was coming to tell you about (the time of) *Laylat ul-Qadr*; when so and so disputed, the knowledge of this was raised (taken); and this may be better for you. So seek it on the ninth, seventh, and fifth nights (after twenty).**›[2]

The Night of the Twenty-first

In another report, Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه) narrates that a number of the *ṣaḥābah* performed *iʿtikāf* with Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) during the middle ten days of *Ramaḍān*. On the morning of the twentieth of *Ramaḍān*, they were preparing to leave when the Prophet (ﷺ) addressed them saying:

«إنّها في العشر الأواخر، فمن كان اعتكف معي فليعتكف العشرَ

الأواخر، فقد أُريتُ هذه الليلة، ثم أُنسيتُها، وقد رأيْتُني أسجد في

ماءٍ وطين من صبيحتها، فالتمسوها في العشر الأواخر والتمسوها

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī.

في كل وتر.»

I was informed (by Allāh) about (when is) *Laylat ul-Qadr*. But I was then made to forget it. So seek it on the last ten, on an odd night. I was also informed that I will make *sujūd* (for the morning prayer that follows it) in water and mud. So let those who started *i'tikāf* with Allāh's Messenger return (to the *Masjid* for ten more days of *i'tikāf*).»

Abū Sa'īd then continues:

> "The people went back to the *Masjid* (to resume *i'tikāf*). We could not see even a thin cloud in the sky. But then, a large cloud came; and it rained that night. The roof of the *Masjid*, which was made of palm reeds, leaked in the Messenger's prayer place on the night of the twenty-first. The (morning) prayer was performed; and Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) made *sujūd* in mud and water, until I saw the mud on his nose and forehead." [1]

The Night of the Twenty-seventh

Other *hadīths* indicate that *Laylat ul-Qadr* falls on the twenty-seventh night of *Ramadān*. For example, Zirr Bin Ḥubaysh reported that Ubayy Bin Ka'b was informed that Ibn Mas'ūd said, "Whoever stands the whole year (in prayer), he will certainly encounter *Laylat ul-Qadr*." Upon hearing this, Ubayy (ؓ) said:

> "May Allāh have mercy on him, he did not want the people to become lazy (if they new more precisely when it is). By the One whom there is no deity but Him, it is surely in *Ramadān*. I swear by Allāh I know which night it is: It is the night in which Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) commanded us to stand (in prayer); it is the night preceding the morning of the twenty-

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī.

> seventh (of *Ramadān*). Its sign is that the sun rises the following morning white and without rays." [1]

Summary

Therefore, *Laylat ul-Qadr* falls on an odd night of the last ten nights of *Ramadān*; it is more likely to be on the last seven, and most likely on the middle one of those, which is the night of the twenty-seventh.

The scholars differ as to whether it always comes on a fixed night, namely, the twenty-seventh [2], as in Zirr's *ḥadīth*, or moves from year to year between these nights [3]. The safest approach is to follow the *hadīths* instructing one to seek it at least on the odd nights of the last ten. At the same time, special care should be given to the night of the twenty-seventh, because it is the night on which the Prophet (ﷺ) gathered all of his family, and passed it in prayer and worship, as in the forthcoming *hadīth* of Abū Tharr (p. 40).

How to Seek *Laylat ul-Qadr*

Laylat ul-Qadr is the most blessed night. A person who misses it has indeed missed a great amount of good. If a believing person is zealous to obey his Lord and increase the good deeds in his record, he should strive to encounter this night and to pass it in worship and obedience. If this is facilitated for him, all of his previous sins will be forgiven.

Praying *Qiyām*

It is recommended to make a long *Qiyām* prayer during the nights on which *Laylat ul-Qadr* could fall. This is indicated in many *ḥadīths*, such as the forthcoming one by Abū Tharr (p. 40). Furthermore, Abū Hurayrah (ؓ) narrated that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

1 Recorded by Muslim and others.

2 This is the opinion expressed by al-Albānī in *Qiyāmu Ramadān*.

3 This is ash-Shawkānī's opinion in *Nayl ul-Awṭār*.

«من صام رمضان إيمانًا واحتسابًا غفر له ما تقدم من ذنبه، ومن

قام ليلة القدر إيمانًا واحتسابًا غفر له ما تقدم من ذنبه»

‹Whoever fasts *Ramadān* with *īmān* and ***ihtisāb*** [1], **his previous sins will be forgiven. And whoever stands (in qiyām) in *Laylat ul-Qadr* with *īmān* and *ihtisāb*, his previous sins will be forgiven.›** [2]

In one of the reports of this *hadīth*, Abū Hurayrah and ʿUbādah Bin as-Sāmit said that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«من قام ليلة القدر ثم وفقت له، إيمانًا واحتسابًا، غفر له ما

تقدم من ذنبه»

‹Whoever stands (in *qiyām*) in *Laylat ul-Qadr* [and it is facilitated for him] [3] **with *īmān* and *ihtisāb*, all of his previous sins will be forgiven.›** [4]

Making Supplications

It is also recommended to make extensive supplication on this night. ʿĀ'ishah (ؓ) reported that she asked Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), "O Messenger of Allāh! If I knew which night is *Laylat ul-Qadr*, what should I say during it?" And he instructed her to say:

«اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوٌّ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي»

‹*Allāhumma innaka ʿafuwwun tuhibb ul-ʿafwa faʿfu ʿannī* – O Allāh! You are forgiving and You love

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1 This means: with true belief and expectation of Allāh's reward.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

3 This addition is recorded by Ahmad from the report of ʿUbādah Bin as-Sāmit; it means that he is permitted to be among the sincere worshippers during that blessed night.

4 Recorded by Muslim and Ahmad.

forgiveness: forgive me.› [1]

Abandoning Worldly Pleasures for the Sake of Worship

It is further recommended to spend more time in worship during the nights on which *Laylat ul-Qadr* is likely to be. This calls for abandoning many worldly pleasures in order to secure the time and thoughts solely for worshipping Allāh. ʿĀ'ishah (ؓ) reported:

> "When the (last) ten started, the Prophet (ﷺ) would tighten his *izār* [2], spend the whole night awake (in prayer), and wake up his family." [3]

And she said:

> "Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) used to strive more (in worship) on the last ten than on other nights." [4]

Signs of *Laylat ul-Qadr*

Authentic Signs

There are signs, mentioned in the authentic reports, by which one might be able to tell whether a specific night was *Laylat ul-Qadr* or not. It is interesting to note that these signs occur after the night ends. Some scholars have indicated that the wisdom behind this is that one would not rely on definite knowledge in order to limit his worship to just one night of the whole year. This understanding is supported by the Prophet's (ﷺ) statement in the preceding *hadīth* of ʿUbādah,

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1 Recorded by Ahmad, Ibn Mājah, and at-Tirmithī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāt* no. 2091).

2 *Izār* is the lower garment that the men used to wrap around themselves, and they still do in some areas, as well as during *Hajj*. This means that he stayed away from his wives in order to have more time for worship.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

4 Recorded by Muslim.

﴿...وعسى أن يكون خيراً لكم...﴾ ‹... **And this may be better for you.** ›.

In the preceding *hadīth* of Ubayy, he (ﷺ) said, "Its sign is that the sun rises on the following morning white, and without rays." In another report, Ubayy (ﷺ) explicitly attributed that meaning to the Prophet (ﷺ):

«صبيحة ليلة القدر تطلع الشمس لا شعاع لها، كأنها طستٌ حتى ترتفع.»

‹**On the morning following *Laylat ul-Qadr*, the sun rises without rays, resembling a dish, until it becomes high.**› [1]

Abū Sa'īd's preceding *hadīth* indicates that it is a humid or rainy night.

A *hadīth* reported by Ibn 'Abbās (ﷺ) indicates that it is a moderate night, neither hot nor cold. He said that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ليلة القدر ليلةٌ سمحةٌ طلقة، لا حارّةٌ ولا باردة. تصبح الشمسُ صبيحتها ضعيفةً حمراء.»

‹***Laylat ul-Qadr* is an easy and moderate night. It is neither hot nor cold. On the morning following it, the sun rises weak (in light) and reddish.**› [2]

According to some scholars, the last descriptions apply to the particular years when the Prophet (ﷺ) made his statements.

Unfounded Folk-tales

Many fables circulate among the common people, claiming unusual incidents happening during *Laylat ul-Qadr*. Those fables claim that the

1 Recorded by Ahmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Sahīh ul-Jāmi'* no. 3754).

2 Recorded by Ibn Khuzaymah, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Sahīh ul-Jāmi'* no. 5475).

trees make *sujūd*, animals act in a strange way, sinners who happen to wake up for a few seconds and ask for wealth become millionaires, etc ...

All of this is nonsense! *Laylat ul-Qadr* is a blessed night that should be spent in worship and obedience, not in negligence or sinning. Only the one who makes good use of it, in accordance with the *Sunnah*, as outlined above, can hope for Allāh's acceptance and blessings.

CHAPTER 4

PRAYING *TARĀWĪḤ* IN *JAMĀʿAH*

The Prophet's *Sunnah*

It is recommended to pray the *qiyām* of *Ramaḍān* in *jamāʿah*. That is better than praying it individually. The Prophet (ﷺ) himself established this *sunnah*; he (ﷺ) approved it for the *ṣaḥābah* (ؓ), did it himself, and emphasized its merits.

The Prophet's Approval

This approval is indicated in the *ḥadīth* of Thaʿlabah Bin Abū Mālik al-Quraẓī, who said:

> "Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) went out (to the *Masjid*) one night during *Ramaḍān*; he saw some people in the corner of the *Masjid* praying. He asked, «ما يصنع هؤلاء؟» **‹What are they doing?›** Someone replied, 'O Allāh's Messenger, these people do not know much *Qurʾān*; Ubayy Bin Kaʿb is reciting; and they are behind him following his prayer.' To which he (ﷺ) replied, «قد أحسنوا، أو، قد أصابوا.» **‹They have done well,›** or he said, **‹They have done right,›** and he did not object to their action." [1]

The Prophet's Action

There are various *ḥadīths* indicating that the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed

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1 Recorded by al-Bayhaqī (2:495). It is *mursal* (no *ṣaḥābī*'s name is present in the *isnād*), Thaʿlabah being a *tābiʿī*. But it is recorded with another *isnād*, from Abū Hurayrah (ؓ), by Ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī (in *Qiyām ul-Layl*), Abū Dāwūd, and al-Bayhaqī. The latter is acceptable as a supportive report.

tarāwīḥ in *jamā'ah*.

1. An-Nu'mān Bin Bashīr (ﷺ) reported:

> "We stood (in prayer) with Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) on the twenty third night of *Ramaḍān* up to the first third of the night; then we stood with him on the twenty-fifth night up to the middle of the night; then he led us on the twenty-seventh night (for so long) that we feared missing the *falāh* (success) ... We used to call *saḥūr* [1]: *falāh*." [2]

Commenting on this *hadīth*, al-Ḥākim said:

> "This carries a clear proof that praying *tarāwīḥ* in the *masjids* of Muslims is an established *sunnah*; 'Alī Bin Abī Ṭālib (ﷺ) continued to urge 'Umar (ﷺ) to revive it, until he finally did." [3]

2. Anas (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) was once praying in *Ramaḍān* (in the *Masjid*). He went and stood next to him (in prayer); another man joined them, then another — until there was a small gathering. When Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) sensed that they were all praying behind him, he made his prayer short, concluded, then entered his house where he resumed praying a much longer prayer than that he prayed with them. In the morning, they asked him, "O Allāh's Messenger, did you notice our presence last night?" He (ﷺ) replied:

«نعم، وذلك الذي حملني على ما صنعت.»

‹Yes, and this is the reason for what I did.› [4]

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1 A light meal eaten by the fasting person just before dawn.
2 Recorded by Ibn Abī Shaybah (in *al-Muṣannaf*), Ibn Naṣr, an-Nasā'ī, Aḥmad, al-Faryābī (in *Kitāb uṣ-Ṣiyām*), and al-Ḥākim; its *isnād* is *ṣaḥīḥ*.
3 Al-Mustadrak 1:440
4 Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Naṣr with two authentic chains, and aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ*.

3. 'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) reported that the people used to pray during *Ramaḍān*'s nights in the Messenger's *Masjid* in separate groups. Thus, a man who knew some *Qur'ān* would have five or six people praying behind him.

On one such night, the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) instructed her to lay down a mat for him (in the *Masjid*) by the door of her apartment; so she did. After praying *'ishā'*, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) went to that mat (to pray). All those who were in the *Masjid* gathered behind him; and he (ﷺ) led them in prayer for a long portion of the night; then he (ﷺ) departed and entered (her apartment), leaving the mat where it was.

In the morning, the people described that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) led some men in prayer on the previous night. So that night, more people gathered, until the *Masjid* was full. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) went out the second night and prayed; and they followed him in the prayer.

The next morning, the people talked about it. So, on the third night, the number of people increased in the *Masjid* until it became overcrowded. Again, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) went out and prayed, and they followed him in the prayer.

On the fourth night the *Masjid* was overrun with people. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) prayed *'ishā'* with them, then went inside his house. The people waited; so Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) asked her, «ما شأن الناس يا عائشة» **‹What do they want, 'Ā'ishah?›** She said, 'O Allāh's Messenger! The people have heard of your prayer yesterday, and have gathered to pray with you.' He (ﷺ) said, «اطو عنّا حصيرك يا عائشة» **‹Fold away your mat,›** which she did.

That night, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) was aware of the people in their places, waiting for him. Some men among them were calling out, 'The Prayer!'

In the morning, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) went out to the *fajr* prayer. After he finished praying, he turned to the people, pronounced the *Shahādah* [1], and then said:

«أيها الناس، أما والله ما بتّ، والحمد لله، ليلتي هذه غافلاً،

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1 The Prophet's (ﷺ) *sunnah* was to start his speeches with *tashahhud* (saying the *Shahādah*).

وما خفي علي مكانكم، ولكني تخوفت أن يفترض عليكم

صلاة الليل فتعجزوا عنها، فاكفلوا من الأعمال ما تطيقون،

فإنّ الله لا يمل حتى تملوا.»

‹O people, by Allāh, and all praise is due to Him, I was not unaware of your presence last night, but I only feared that the night prayer (*qiyām*) would become an obligation for you, which you would be incapable of fulfilling. So commit only to the deed that you would be capable of performing, because Allāh would not tire (from a deed of yours) until you tire.›

In one of the narrations of this *hadīth*, az-Zuhrī[1] said:

"Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) died while the people continued praying according to this (in separate groups). This also continued during the *khilāfah* of Abū Bakr and a portion of the *khilāfah* of ʿUmar."[2]

According to al-Hāfiz Ibn Hajar:

"The statement 'the people continued according to this' refers to not praying *tarāwīh* in *jamāʿah*."

However, it is better to interpret the statement as, "They continued to pray *tarāwīh* in separate groups," as the beginning of this *hadīth* indicates. Thus, they continued to pray behind various *imām*s, as will be confirmed further in the reports from ʿUmar (ﷺ).

These *hadīth*s provide clear evidence for praying *tarāwīh* in *jamāʿah*, since the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed it on those nights. This conclusion does not conflict with his stopping on the fourth night,

1 A student of the foremost *tābiʿī* Saʿīd Bin al-Musayyib. He was a great scholar and trustworthy narrator of *Hadīth*. He died in 123 H.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasāʾī, al-Faryābī, Ibn Nasr, and Ahmad. The above text agrees most with the reports of the latter two.

because he stated the reason for his action, **‹I feared that it would become obligatory for you.›**

And there is no doubt that this apprehension dissipated with his (ﷺ) passing after Allāh (ﷻ) had completed the religion. Thus, the reason for not praying *tarāwīh* in congregation was gone, restoring the earlier ruling that it is recommended to pray it in *jamāʿah*. This is why ʿUmar Bin al-Khattāb (ﷺ) revived it, as is the opinion of the majority of the scholars.

4. Huthayfah Bin al-Yamān (ﷺ) reported that one night during *Ramadān*, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) stood in a cabin made of palm reeds. He poured a pail of water on himself, then said:

«الله أكبر (ثلاثا)، ذا الملكوت، والجبروت، والكبرياء، والعظمة.»

**‹*Allāhu Akbar* [three times]. *Thal malakūti, wal jabarūti, wal kibriyāʾi, wal ʿazamah* —
Allāh is the Greatest [three times]. You are the Possessor of dominion, might, pride, and greatness.›**

Then he recited *al-Baqarah*; then he bowed a bowing similar (in duration) to his standing. During his bowing he said:

«سبحان ربي العظيم، سبحان ربي العظيم.»

**‹*Subhāna rabbiyal ʿazīm, subhāna rabbiyal ʿazīm* —
Exalted is my Lord the Great; exalted is my Lord the Great.›**

Then he raised his head from bowing, and stood (a duration) similar to his bowing, saying:

«لربي الحمد.»

‹*Li-rabbiyal-hamd* — To my Lord belongs all praise.›

Then he prostrated, and his prostration was similar (in duration) to his (last) standing. He said in his prostration:

«سبحان ربي الأعلى.»

‹*Subhāna rabbiyal-a'lā* — **Exalted is my Lord the Highest.**›

Then he raised his head from prostration and sat; and he said between the two prostrations:

«ربي اغفر لي، ربي اغفر لي.»

‹*Rabbi ghfir lī, rabbi ghfir lī* — **My Lord, forgive me; my Lord, forgive me.**›

And he sat a duration similar to that of his prostration. Then he prostrated (a second time) similar (in duration) to his sitting and said:

«سبحان ربي الأعلى.»

‹*Subhāna rabbiyal-a'lā* — **Exalted is my Lord the Highest.**›

Thus he prayed four *rak'āt*, reciting in them *al-Baqarah*, *Āl-'Imrān*, *an-Nisā'*, *al-Mā'idah*, and *al-An'ām* — until Bilāl came announcing the time for the (*fajr*) prayer. [1]

The Prophet's Encouragement

The Prophet (ﷺ) indicated the merits of praying *tarāwīḥ* in *jamā'ah*. For example, Abū Tharr (ﷺ) reported the following:

> "We fasted with Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) in *Ramaḍān*. He did not lead us (in *qiyām*) at all until there were seven (nights of *Ramaḍān*) left. Then he stood with us (that night — in prayer) until one third of the night had passed. He did not pray with us on the sixth. On the

1 Recorded (in various parts and with some variations) by Muslim, Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā'ī, at-Tirmiḏhī, Ibn Mājah, Ibn Abī Shaybah, Ibn Naṣr, al-Ḥākim, at-Ṭaḥāwī in (*al-Mushkal*), at-Ṭayālisī, al-Bayhaqī, and al-Baghawī.

> fifth night, he prayed with us until half of the night had passed. So we said, 'Allāh's Messenger! Wouldn't you pray with us the whole night?' He replied:
>
> «إنه من قام مع الإمام حتى ينصرف، كتب له قيام ليلة.»
>
> ‹**Whoever stands in prayer with the *imām* until he (the *imām*) concludes the prayer, it is recorded for him that he prayed the whole night.**›
>
> He (ﷺ) did not lead us in prayer on the fourth (of the remaining nights). On the third night [1], he gathered his family, his wives and the people. He led us in prayer (for a long time) - until we feared missing the *falāḥ*. He (ﷺ) did not pray with us for the rest of the month." Abū Tharr was asked, "What is *falāḥ*?" He replied, "*Saḥūr*." [2]

The evidence from this *hadīth* is his (ﷺ) statement, ‹**Whoever stands with the *imām* ...**› which is an obvious indication that it is better to pray the *qiyām* of *Ramaḍān* with the *imām*. This is confirmed by what Abū Dāwūd mentioned:

> "I heard Aḥmad being asked, 'Do you like for a man to pray with the people or by himself during *Ramaḍān*?' He replied, 'Pray with the people.' I also heard him say, 'I would prefer for one to pray (*qiyām*) with the *imām* and to pray *witr* with him as well, for the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

1 Meaning the twenty-seventh night, which is *Laylat ul-Qadr* according to most sayings. This is why the Prophet (ﷺ) gathered all of his family and women, which makes it desirable that the women attend on this night.

2 Recorded by Ibn Abī Shaybah, Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmiḏhī (who authenticated it), an-Nisā'ī, Ibn Mājah, at-Ṭaḥāwī (in *Sharḥu Ma'ān il-Āthār*, Ibn Naṣr, al-Faryābī, and al-Bayhaqī. Their *isnād* is authentic (*Irwā' ul-Ghalīl* no. 447).

«إنه من قام مع الإمام حتى ينصرف، كتب له قيام ليلة.»

‹Whoever stands in prayer with the *imām* until he (the *imām*) concludes the prayer, it is recorded for him that he prayed the whole night.›" [1]

Ibn Nasr reported similarly from Aḥmad. Abū Dāwūd also said:

> "Aḥmad was asked, while I was listening, 'Should one delay *qiyām*, meaning *tarāwīḥ*, to the last part of the night?' He said, 'No, the Muslims' *Sunnah* is more beloved to me.'" [2]

By this he meant that praying *tarāwīḥ* in *jamāʿah*, early in the night, is better than praying it alone later in the night. Even though delaying it has a special merit, yet praying it in *jamāʿah* is better because the Prophet (ﷺ) established it on those nights when he prayed with the people, as in the preceding *ḥadīth*s of ʿĀ'ishah and others. That is why the Muslims continued to do it from ʿUmar's time until now.

Reason for Discontinuing *Qiyām* in *Jamāʿah*

As indicated in the preceding *ḥadīth* of ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) in the Two *Ṣaḥīḥ*s and others, the Prophet (ﷺ) did not pray with the *ṣaḥābah* for the remainder of the month, fearing that the *qiyām* prayer in *Ramaḍān* would become obligatory for them, an obligation that they would not be able to fulfill.

This apprehension dissolved with his (ﷺ) passing after Allāh (ﷻ) had completed the religion. Thus, the reason for not praying the *qiyām* of *Ramaḍān* in congregation was gone, though the earlier ruling of its merit remained intact.

The practice of praying it in *jamāʿah* was then revived by ʿUmar (ﷺ), as is described below.

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1 *Al-Masāʾil*.

2 *Al-Masāʾil*.

ʿUmar Revives the *Sunnah*

ʿUmar's Action

As mentioned above, after the Prophet's (ﷺ) death, people prayed *tarāwīḥ* in the *Masjid* in separate groups, behind various *imāms*. That was during the *Khilāfah* of Abū Bakr (ﷺ) and a portion of ʿUmar's (ﷺ). Later on, ʿUmar (ﷺ) gathered the people behind one *imām*. Abd ur-Raḥmān Bin Abd al-Qārī reported:

> "I went out with ʿUmar Bin al-Khaṭṭāb (ﷺ) one night in *Ramaḍān* to the *Masjid*; we found the people praying in separate groups: a man praying by himself, or a man leading a group of people in the prayer. So he (ﷺ) said, 'By Allāh (ﷻ), I believe that it would be better if I gather all of these people behind one reciter only.' Later on, he resolved to do it, and gathered them behind Ubayy Bin Kaʿb.
>
> I went out with him on another night while the people were praying behind one reciter. ʿUmar (ﷺ) said, 'This is indeed a good new practice, even though the part of night that they sleep through is better (for prayer) than the part in which they are praying.' By that, he meant the later part of the night, because the people used to pray early in the night." [1]

This has another report in which ʿUmar (ﷺ) says:

> "If this thing is innovated, then it is indeed a good innovation." [2]

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1 This is recorded by Mālik (in *al-Muwaṭṭa'*) and, from him, al-Bukhārī and al-Faryābī. It is also recorded by Ibn Abī Shaybah without his saying, "This is a good new matter."

2 Recorded by Ibn Sa'd and al-Faryābī. The narrators of this report are all trustworthy, except Nawfal Bin Iyās, about whom al-Ḥāfiẓ said (in *at-Taqrīb*), "Acceptable," meaning when he is backed by other narrators; otherwise he is weak, as al-Ḥāfiẓ himself stated in the introduction.

Umar's Understanding

Thus, as indicated earlier, the Prophet (ﷺ) led the *ṣaḥābah* in *tarāwīḥ* for three nights; then he stopped for fear that this prayer would become an obligation on the Muslims. The people then continued to pray in small groups, as they did before, until ʿUmar gathered them, may Allāh (ﷻ) be pleased with him and reward him for his great efforts for Islām. Ibn ut-Tīn and other scholars concluded:

> "ʿUmar (ﷺ) deduced that he should do this from the Prophet's (ﷺ) approval during those nights. When he (ﷺ) later disliked it, it was only because he feared that it would become obligatory for the people. It is probably for this reason that al-Bukhārī, after mentioning ʿUmar's action, cited ʿĀʾishah's *ḥadīth* (which preceded). After the Prophet (ﷺ) passed away, such fear was gone, and ʿUmar realized the importance of gathering the people, because praying separately gives the appearance of disunity, and because praying behind one *imām* helps the people endure the length of the prayer. This action of ʿUmar was adopted by the majority of the scholars (as being the truth)." [1]

In regard to ʿUmar's (ﷺ) statement, "The part of night that they sleep through is better," al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar said:

> "This is a declaration from him that praying during the later part of the night is better than praying early. However, It does not imply that praying the night prayer (*tarāwīḥ*) individually is better than in *jamāʿah*."

In fact, praying in *jamāʿah* at the earlier time is surely better than praying individually at the later time, as has been clarified earlier.

1 *Fatḥ ul-Bārī* 4:203-204.

Wrong Conclusions from ʿUmar's Action

A common practice among people of the later generations is to misinterpret ʿUmar's (ﷺ) statement, "*Niʿmat il-bidʿatu hāthih* — This is indeed a good new matter." Many use it as basis for two misconceptions

First Misconception:

> "Praying *tarāwīḥ* in *jamāʿah* is a *bidʿah* that was not known during the time of the Prophet (ﷺ)."

The error of this misconception is obvious, as is demonstrated in the *ḥadīths* that we cited earlier: The Prophet (ﷺ) prayed with the people in *jamāʿah* for three nights in *Ramaḍān*; and he only stopped for fear that it would become an obligation.

Second Misconception:

> "Some *bidʿahs* (innovations) are praiseworthy; and general statements by the Prophet (ﷺ), such as, «كل بدعة ضلالة» **‹Every *bidʿah* is an act of misguidance,›** should be restricted by this statement of ʿUmar."

This is also invalid. The general meaning of this and similar *ḥadīths* holds without restriction.

In his statement, ʿUmar did not intend the *sharʿī* meaning of *bidʿah*, which is to innovate in the *Dīn* something without a precedent. It is clear that he did not innovate anything, but has rather revived several of the Prophet's (ﷺ) *sunnahs*.

He only meant *bidʿah* according to one of its linguistic meanings, which is a new or novel thing that was not commonly known prior to its initiation. There is no doubt that praying *tarāwīḥ* in *jamāʿah* behind one *imām* was not a commonly known practice during the *Khilāfah* of Abū Bakr (ﷺ) and a portion of ʿUmar's (ﷺ), as preceded. With this understanding, it is a new matter. But since it is in accordance with the Prophet's (ﷺ) action, it is a *sunnah* and not *bidʿah*. Describing it as

being good is only because of this; and this is the understanding of the great scholars in explanation of this statement by ʻUmar. For example, ʻAbd ul-Wahhāb as-Subkī said:

> "Ibn ʻAbd ul-Barr said, 'ʻUmar did not legislate except what Allāh's Messenger legislated, and what he loved and accepted. Nothing prevented him (ﷺ) from continuing (with *tarāwīḥ* in *jamāʻah*) except fearing that it would become an obligation for his *Ummah*, because he was kind and merciful toward the believers. ʻUmar (ؓ) learned that from Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), and understood that one may not add to the obligations or take away from them after his (ﷺ) death. He therefore re-established it for the people, revived it, and commanded it; he did this on the year fourteen of *Hijrah*. That was a (good) thing that Allāh reserved for him particularly to do; He (ﷻ) did not inspire Abū Bakr (ؓ) to do it, even though he was better than him, and generally faster in performing all that is good. Each of these two possessed virtues that his companion did not.'
>
> Had *tarāwīḥ* not been an ordained *sunnah*, it would be a rejected innovation, as is the case for *ar-Raghāʼib* prayer on the middle night of *Shaʻbān* and on the first Friday of *Rajab*. If this was the case, it would be incumbent to forbid it; but that was never done, as is obviously known in the *Dīn*." [1]

The great scholar Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī said:

> "Driving the Jews and Christians out of the Arabian peninsula, and fighting the Turks are not *bidʻahs* — since these were done by the command of the Prophet (ﷺ), even though they were not done during his lifetime. And in ʻUmar's saying regarding the *tarāwīḥ* prayers, 'This is indeed a good *bidʻah*,' he

1 *Ishrāq ul-Maṣābīḥ fī Ṣalāt it-Tarāwīḥ* (1:168).

meant the linguistic meaning of *bidʻah*, which is to do something that was not being done, similar to what Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿قُلْ مَا كُنتُ بِدْعًا مِّنَ ٱلرُّسُلِ﴾ الأحقاف ٩

«I did not bring something unprecedented among the messengers.» [1]

This does not indicate a *bidʻah* in the *sharʻī* sense, because such a *bidʻah* would be an act of misguidance, as was indicated by the Messenger (ﷺ).

Scholars who classify the *bidʻah*s into good and bad only intend the linguistic meaning of *bidʻahs*; and those who say that every *bidʻah* is a misguidance mean the *bidʻah* in the *sharʻī* sense.

Just look at how the *ṣaḥābah* (ؓ), as well as those who followed them in a good way, have objected to giving *athān* for prayers other than the five daily prayers, such as the *ʻĪd* prayers, even though there is no explicit prohibition in that regard. Also, they disliked people holding onto the two *Shāmī* [2] corners of the *Kaʻbah*, as well as praying after *saʻī* [3] in analogy to praying after *ṭawāf* (circulation around al-Kaʻbah).

Furthermore, there are things that the Prophet (ﷺ) avoided despite the need and ability to do them during his lifetime. Avoiding such things is then a *sunnah*, and doing them is a blameworthy innovation. By our saying, 'Despite the need and ability to do them,' we exclude driving out the Jews, compiling the *Muṣḥaf*, and other things that he (ﷺ) did not do because of reasons that prevented doing them.

Thus, there was a need to pray *tarāwīḥ* in *jamāʻah*,

1 *Al-Aḥqāf* 46:9.

2 These are the two corners on the north side of the *Kaʻbah*, which is the direction of the land of ash-Shām (Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine).

3 Running between as-Ṣafā and al-Marwah during *hajj*.

but there was also a reason that prevented the Prophet (ﷺ) from continuing to pray it in *jamā'ah*." [1]

Women Joining the *Jamā'ah*

Women are permitted to attend the *qiyām* prayer, as is indicated in the preceding *hadīth* of Abū Tharr. It is also permitted to appoint an *imām* specifically for them. It is confirmed that 'Umar (ﷺ) gathered the people for *qiyām*, appointing Ubayy Bin Ka'b to lead the men, and Sulaymān Bin Abī Hathmah to lead the women. Also, 'Arfajah ath-Thaqafī said:

> "Alī Bin Abī Tālib (ﷺ) commanded the people to pray *qiyām* during the month of *Ramadān*; he appointed one *imām* for the men and one for the women. I was the women's *imām*." [2]

This is recommended when the *masjid* is large enough that the two *imāms* would not distract each other (by their recitation).

1 *Al-Ibdā fī Madārr il-Ibtidā'*.

2 These two reports were recorded by al-Bayhaqī, 'Abd ur-Razāq (in *al-Musannaf*), and Ibn Nasr (in *Qiyām ul-Layl*).

CHAPTER 5

NUMBER OF *RAK'ĀT* OF *QIYĀM*

Introduction

The correct number of *rak'āt* for *qiyām* is eleven (11). This follows from the Messenger's (ﷺ) *Sunnah*. One may not add to this number, for he (ﷺ) did not add to it his entire life.

However, one may reduce the number of these *rak'āt*; one may even pray only one *rak'ah* of *witr*. This is supported by the Prophet's (ﷺ) actions and words.

The Number that the Prophet Prayed

We have established that it is recommended to pray *tarāwīh* in *jamā'ah*. We need next to establish the number of *rak'āt* that the Prophet (ﷺ) performed when he prayed alone, as well as when he led the people in *jamā'ah*.

'Āishah's Reports

Abū Salamah Bin 'Abd ur-Rahmān reported that he asked 'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) about the Messenger's prayer during *Ramadān*. She said:

> "Whether it was *Ramadān* or any other month, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) did not pray more than eleven *rak'āt*. He would pray four [1] - and do not ask about their beauty or length. Then he would pray four - and do not ask about their beauty or length. Then he would pray

1 Meaning with one *taslīm*.

three." [1]

An-Nawawī commented in his Explanation of *Sahīh Muslim*, "This indicates the permission to do so (pray four with one *taslīm*). However, it is better to perform *taslīm* every two *rak'āt*, which was the common practice of the Prophet (ﷺ), and conforms with his command to pray the night prayer in pairs."

The position in the *Shāfi'ī mathhab*, as indicated in *al-Fiqhu 'alal Mathāhib il-Arba'ah*, al-Qastalāni's Commentary on *al-Bukhārī*, and others is, "One must make *taslīm* at the end of each pair of *rak'āt*; and if one prays the four with one *taslīm*, his prayer will not be acceptable." This position conflicts with this authentic *hadīth*, as well as the above sound understanding of an-Nawawī, who is one of the great scholars of that *mathhab*. Thus, no one is excused to give a *fatwā* (verdict) contrary to this.

In another report, 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) said:

> "Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) prayed at night, in *Ramadān* and other months, thirteen *rak'āt*, of which were the two *rak'āt* of *fajr*." [2]

And in still another report, 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) said:

> "Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) prayed thirteen *rak'āt* at night. Then, after hearing the call for *fajr* prayer, he would pray two short *rak'āt*." [3]

Regarding the apparent conflict between the last two reports, al-Hāfiz Ibn Hajar said:

> "It is possible that, in this report, 'Ā'ishah included in the night prayer the two post-*'ishā'* *rak'āt* that he (ﷺ) prayed at home, or the two short *rak'āt* with which

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū 'Uwānah, Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmithī, an-Nasā'ī, Mālik, al-Bayhaqī, and Ahmad.
2 Recorded by Ibn Abī Shaybah, Muslim, and others.
3 Recorded by Mālik and, from him, al-Bukhārī and others.

> he (ﷺ) started the *qiyām*. It is established in *Sahīh Muslim* that he (ﷺ) used to start his night prayer with two short *rak'āt*. I find the latter possibility more correct, because the report of Abū Salamah, which confines the number to eleven *rak'āt*, describes that, 'He prayed four then four then three.' It does not make any reference to the two short *rak'āt* mentioned in Mālik's report. This is permissible, because the addition to a report by a trustworthy *hāfiz* [1] is acceptable. This is further confirmed by a report recorded by Ahmad and Abū Dāwūd from 'Abdullāh Bin Abī Qays from 'Ā'ishah saying:
>
> 'The Prophet (ﷺ) would make *witr* with four and three, ..., or ten and three. He would not make *witr* with more than thirteen or less than seven' [2]
>
> This is the most authentic report that I found in this regard, and with it, one may resolve the apparent conflict between the reports from 'Ā'ishah."

This explanation by al-Hāfiz is also confirmed by Mālik's report from Zayd Bin Khālid al-Juhanī who narrated:

> "One night, I decided to closely observe the way the Messenger (ﷺ) performed his night prayer.
> So he prayed two short *rak'āt*.
> Then he prayed two extremely long *rak'āt*.
> Then he prayed two *rak'āt* shorter than the preceding two.
> Then he prayed two *rak'āt* shorter than the preceding two.
> Then he prayed two *rak'āt* shorter than the preceding two.
> Then he prayed two *rak'āt* shorter than the preceding two.
> Then he prayed (one) *witr*.
> This totaled to thirteen *rak'āt*." [3]

1 Meticulous recorder or memorizer of *Hadīth*.
2 This *hadīth* is cited later in this chapter.
3 Recorded by Mālik, Muslim, Abū 'Uwānah, Abū Dāwūd, and Ibn Nasr.

What seems to be most likely is that these two short *rakʿāt* are the *sunnah* of *ʿIshāʾ*, because there are no reports mentioning them in addition to the thirteen *rakʿāt*.

Jābir's Report

Jābir Bin ʿAbdillāh (ﷺ) reported:

> "Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) led us (one night) during *Ramaḍān*, praying eight *rakʿāt* and *witr*. On the following night, we gathered in the *Masjid* hoping that he will come out again (to lead the prayer). We stayed there until the morning. Then we entered (to the center of the *Masjid*) and said, 'O Messenger of Allāh! Last night we gathered in the *Masjid* hoping that you would lead us in the prayer.' To which he replied
>
> «قد رأيت الذي صنعتم، فلم يمنعني من الخروج إلا أني خشيت أن تفرض عليكم.»
>
> ‹Indeed I feared that it would become an obligation on you›"[1]

Ibn ʿAbbās's Weak Report

Commenting on the above *ḥadīth* of ʿĀʾishah, al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar said:

> "As for what was recorded by Ibn Abī Shaybah, from the *ḥadīth* of Ibn ʿAbbās (ﷺ), that, 'Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) used to pray in *Ramaḍān* twenty *rakʿāt* and *witr*,' it has a weak *isnād*; furthermore, it contradicts ʿĀʾishah's *ḥadīth* in the two *Ṣaḥīḥs*. And she knows better than other people about the affairs of the Prophet (ﷺ) at night."[1]

1 Recorded by Ibn Naṣr, and aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Muʿjam uṣ-Ṣaghīr*. Its *isnād* is *ḥasan* because of the previous *ḥadīth*. In *Fatḥ ul-Bārī* and *at-Talkhīṣ*, al-Ḥāfiẓ indicated its soundness, and referenced it to Ibn Khuzaymah and Ibn Ḥibbān in their *Ṣaḥīḥs*.

Prior to Ibn Ḥajar, al-Ḥāfiẓ az-Zaylaʿī expressed a similar understanding as well[2].

In addition, this *ḥadīth* of Ibn ʿAbbās (ﷺ) is very weak, as stated by as-Suyūṭī[3]. Its problem arises from Abū Shaybah Ibrāhīm Bin ʿUthmān, whose narrations are rejected, as stated by al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar in *at-Taqrīb*. All narrations of this *ḥadīth* include this narrator in their *isnād*[4].

In fact, this Abū Shaybah is very weak, as Ibn Ḥajar indicated. Also, Ibn Maʿīn said, "He is not trustworthy." Al-Jawzajānī said, "He is deposed." Shuʿbah considered him a liar in a story that he reported. And al-Bukhārī said, "They (the scholars of *Ḥadīth*) do not transmit his narrations." According to al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr:

> "When al-Bukhārī says about someone that, 'They refuse to transmit his narrations (*sakatū ʿAnh*)', it means that he classifies him as being in the least and worst position."[5]

Because of this, this *ḥadīth* should be regarded as being fabricated, especially since it conflicts with the preceding authentic *ḥadīths* of

1 *Fatḥ ul-Bārī* 4:205.

2 *Naṣb ur-Rāyah* 2:153.

3 *Al-Ḥāwī lil-Fatāwī* 2:73.

4 Recorded by Ibn Abī Shaybah in *al-Muṣannaf*, ʿAbd Bin Ḥamīd in *al-Muntakhab min al-Musnad*, aṭ-Ṭabarānī in both *al-Muʿjam ul-Kabīr* and *al-Awsaṭ*, as well as the selections from *al-Muʿjam ul-Awsaṭ* by aḏh-Ḏhahabī, and the combined version of *al-Kabīr* and *al-Awsaṭ* by others.

It was also recorded by Ibn ʿAdiyy in *al-Kāmil*, al-Khaṭīb in *al-Mūḍiḥ*, and al-Bayhaqī in *as-Sunan*.

All of these reports contain in their *isnād* this person, Ibrāhīm, from al-Ḥakam, from Muqsim, from Ibn ʿAbbās. Aṭ-Ṭabarānī said, "This *ḥadīth* is not reported from Ibn ʿAbbās except with this *isnād*." And al-Bayhaqī said, "This is solely reported by Abū Shaybah; and he is weak (in reporting)." Al-Haythamī also said (in *al-Mujmaʿ* 3:172) that he is weak.

5 *Ikhtiṣāru ʿUlūm il-Ḥadīth*.

ʿĀ'ishah and Jābir. Al-Ḥāfiẓ uth-Thahabī included this *ḥadīth* with the *munkars*, and Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī said:

> "It is extremely weak. The *imāms* (scholars of *Ḥadīth*) have been severe in criticizing and condemning one of its narrators. He narrates fabricated *ḥadīths*, such as 'No nation was destroyed except in March,' and 'The Dooms Hour will not arise except in March.' This *ḥadīth* regarding *tarāwīḥ* is among his *munkars*. As-Subkī has declared that the condition to accept a weak *ḥadīth* is that its weakness must not be severe. And ath-Thahabī said, 'Anyone whom Shuʿbah considers a liar, his *ḥadīth* should not be considered at all.'" [1]

Note that al-Haythamī's citation from as-Subkī includes a brief indication that his (al-Haythamī's) opinion is that one may not pray twenty *rakʿāt*.

After citing the *ḥadīth* of Jābir Bin ʿAbdillāh, recorded by Ibn Ḥibbān, as-Suyūṭī said:

> "We conclude that praying twenty *rakʿāt* was not substantiated by his action (ﷺ). The *ḥadīth* recorded by Ibn Ḥibbān strongly supports our position of adhering to what al-Bukhārī has recorded from the *ḥadīth* of ʿĀ'ishah that he (ﷺ) did not pray, whether in *Ramaḍān* or any other month, more than eleven *rakʿāt*. It (Ibn Ḥibbān's *ḥadīth*) agrees with it in that he prayed *tarāwīḥ* eight *rakʿāt* followed by three *witr*, making a total of eleven *rakʿāt*.
>
> What supports this, as well, is that the Prophet (ﷺ) was consistent in his deeds, as he persisted in praying two *rakʿāt* after ʿ*aṣr* despite the fact that it is a time when prayer is disapproved. Had he ever prayed twenty, he would never have stopped doing that. And had that happened, it would not be unknown to ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ)

1 Al-Fatāwī al-Kubrā 1:195.

> who said what preceded." [1]

This strongly indicates that he (as-Suyūṭī) adopted praying eleven *rakʿāt*, and rejected praying twenty as in the extremely weak *ḥadīth* of Ibn ʿAbbās.

Reports from ʿUmar

ʿUmar Commands the People to Pray Eleven *Rakʿāt*

ʿUmar (ﷺ) commanded the people to pray eleven *rakʿāt*. As-Sā'ib Bin Yazīd (ﷺ) said:

> "ʿUmar Bin al-Khaṭṭāb commanded Ubayy Bin Kaʿb and Tamīm ad-Dārī to lead the people in *qiyām* with eleven *rakʿāt*. The reciter would read one hundred *āyāt* (in each *rakʿah*), until we had to lean on canes because of the long standing. We would not finish except with the arrival of *fajr*." [2]

It should be noted that in his report, Ibn Isḥāq had the number as, "Thirteen *rakʿāt*". Ibn Naṣr reported it similarly in *Qiyām ul-Layl*, and added:

1 *Al-Ḥāwī lil-Fatāwī*.

2 Recorded by Mālik in *al-Muwaṭṭa'* from Muḥammad Bin Yūsuf from as-Sā'ib Bin Yazīd. This *isnād* is very authentic because Muḥammad Bin Yūsuf is considered trustworthy by the scholars; and the two *Shaykhs* (al-Bukhārī and Muslim) have accepted his narrations. As-Sā'ib Bin Yazīd is a *ṣaḥābī* who performed *Ḥajj* in his youth with the Prophet (ﷺ).

This is also recorded by:

a) Ibn Abī Shaybah (in *al-Muṣannaf*) from Yaḥyā Bin Saʿīd al-Qaṭṭān.
b) An-Naysābūrī from Ismāʿīl Bin Umayyah, Usāmah Bin Zayd, and Muḥammad Bin Isḥāq.
c) Ibn Khuzaymah from Ismāʿīl Bin Jaʿfar al-Madanī.

All of those reported it from Muḥammad Bin Yūsuf as above.

"Ibn Ishāq said. 'In this regard I have not heard anything more valid and acceptable to me than the report of as-Sā'ib; and that is because Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) used to pray thirteen *rak'āt* at night.'"

This number (thirteen) was only mentioned by Ibn Isḥāq. It agrees with one of the preceding reports from 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) about the Prophet's (ﷺ) prayer at night, where she indicated that two of these *rak'āt* were the *sunnah* of *fajr*. Ibn Isḥāq's report can be interpreted similarly, thereby agreeing with the other narrators'.

From what preceded, we realize the obvious mistake in Ibn 'Abd il-Barr's statement, "I do not know anyone who reported eleven *rak'āt* except Mālik." Al-Mubārakfūrī commented on this statement, "This is an invalid misconception."[1] Also, az-Zarqānī refuted Ibn 'Abd ul-Barr's statement by saying:

"This statement is not correct! The narration (about 'Umar) was reported with a different chain, from Sa'īd Bin Mansūr, from Muḥammad Bin Yūsuf, who said, 'Eleven *rak'āt*,' similar to what Mālik recorded."[2]

Weakness of the Twenty-*Rak'āt* Reports

There are various defective reports claiming that 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) commanded the people to pray twenty or twenty three *rak'āt* for *tarāwīḥ*. Such reports may not be used to challenge the authentic reports that he commanded eleven *rak'āt*, as established above.

It is unfortunate that there are people who claim that:

"The report of twenty *rak'āt* is established with authentic *isnād* from various ways."

1 *Tuḥfat ul-Aḥwathī*.

2 The commentary on *al-Muwaṭṭa'*. The *isnād* of this report is extremely authentic, as was stated by as-Suyūṭī in *al-Maṣābīḥ*. This alone is sufficient to reject the statement of Ibn 'Abd ul-Barr, how then if we add to it the other supportive reports mentioned above?

Those who make such claims do not usually demonstrate the authenticity of any of these alleged ways! In the following, we present and refute the most common of those defective reports.

1. 'Abd ur-Razzāq's Report

'Abd ur-Razzāq reported, with a different chain from the above authentic one, from Muḥammad Bin Yūsuf, that 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) commanded the people to pray, "Twenty-one *rak'āt*." This wording is incorrect for two reasons:

a) It disagrees with the preceding report, by trustworthy reporters, of eleven *rak'āt*.

b) 'Abd ur-Razzāq is the only narrator who has this wording.

Even if we assume that the narrators between him and Muḥammad Bin Yūsuf are acceptable, he himself is defective because, even though he is a trustworthy *ḥāfiẓ* and famous compiler of *Ḥadīth*, yet he became blind toward the end of his life, making his reporting faulty. This was mentioned by al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar in *at-Taqrīb*. Also, the *ḥāfiẓ* Abū 'Amr Ibn uṣ-Ṣalāḥ cited him as an example for those whose reports became confused at the end of their life. He said:

"Aḥmad Bin Ḥanbal mentioned that 'Abd ur-Razzāq became blind at the end of his life; so he was getting (uncertain) reports (from others). Thus, any reporting from him after he became blind is worthless. An-Nasā'ī said, 'The reports from him are questionable — for those who reported from him towards the end of his life.'"[1]

Ibn uṣ-Ṣalāḥ also said:

"The ruling in regard to those who get confused in their reporting is that: reports are acceptable from narrators

1 *Muqaddimatu 'Ulūm il-Ḥadīth* p. 407.

who reported from them before confusion; and they are rejected from those who narrated after confusion, or at a time that is not known whether before or after." [1]

This report of ʿAbd ur-Razzāq is of the third type; i.e., it is not known whether he reported it before or after his confusion, so it cannot be accepted. This is said with the assumption that this report is secure from problems of being odd or in conflict with other reports. How could it then be accepted with these additional problems?

2. Ibn Khuṣayfah's Report

This report (of ʿAbd ur-Razzāq) is also recorded by al-Faryābī [2] and al-Bayhaqī [3], from Yazīd Bin Khuṣayfah, from as-Sāʾib Bin Yazīd, as follows:

> "They used to stand in prayer in *Ramaḍān* during the time of ʿUmar (ﷺ) with twenty *rakʿāt*; they used to read hundreds (of *āyāt*); and they would lean on their canes during the time of ʿUthmān (ﷺ) because of the long duration of the prayer."

This report is the main evidence for those who claim that it is permissible to pray twenty *rakʿāt*. For a superficial inspection, it appears to have an authentic *isnād*. Because of this, some scholars have considered it authentic. However, it has several elements of weakness, making it defective and rejected:

a) Ibn Khuṣayfah is a trustworthy narrator; however, as indicated by *Imām* Aḥmad, his reporting is *munkar*. Because of this, aṯh-Ṯhahabī included him in his book *al-Mīzān* [4].

Imām Aḥmad's statement indicates that Ibn Khuṣayfah sometimes reports things that are not reported by more

1 *Muqaddimatu ʿUlūm il-Ḥadīth* p. 391.

2 *Aṣ-Ṣiyām* 1:76.

3 *As-Sunan* 2:496.

4 In this book, aṯh-Ṯhahabī records the narrators criticized by the scholars of *Ḥadīth*.

trustworthy narrators [1]. The reports of such a narrator are rejected when they disagree with those of the more meticulous narrators, and are considered *shāṯh* (odd) — as is established in the studies of "*Ḥadīth* fundamentals".

The current report by Ibn Khuṣayfah is of this type. Both he and Muḥammad Bin Yūsuf reported it from as-Sāʾib Bin Yazīd. These two have differed in regard to the number, Ibn Yūsuf reporting eleven, and Ibn Khuṣayfah twenty. Ibn Yūsuf's report is more acceptable, because he is more meticulous; al-Ḥāfiẓ described him as, "Trustworthy and meticulous," whereas he only said about Ibn Khuṣayfah, "Trustworthy." This difference is among the weighing factors when there is a difference in the reports, as is well known to those who are versed in this noble specialty (*ʿIlm ul-Ḥadīth*).

b) Ibn Khuṣayfah is inconsistent in the number that he reported; Ismāʿīl Bin Umayyah reported that Muḥammad Bin Yūsuf related to him a narration similar to that recorded by Mālik (which preceded). Ibn Umayyah then asked him, "Don't you mean twenty-one (rather than eleven)?" Ibn Yūsuf replied, "Ibn Khuṣayfah also heard it from as-Sāʾib Bin Yazīd." Ibn Umayyah asked, "Do you mean Yazīd Bin Khuṣayfah? But he said, 'I think that as-Sāʾib said, "Twenty-one!" ' " [2]

His statement, "Twenty-one" in this narration differs from, "Twenty" in the previous one. Ibn Khuṣayfah's saying, "I think" indicates an inconsistency in reporting the number, and that he did not memorize it properly. This alone is sufficient to reject his report — especially when we realize that it conflicts with that of one who is more reliable than himself.

c) Muḥammad Bin Yūsuf is as-Sāʾib Bin Yazīd's nephew. Because of this relationship, he has more knowledge and mastery of as-Sāʾib's reports than other people. Thus, the number that he reported is more acceptable than that of Ibn

1 See *ar-Rafʿu wat-Takmīl fil-Jarḥi wat-Taʿdīl* by Abū al-Ḥasanāt al-Laknawī p. 14-15.

2 This report has an authentic *isnād*.

Khusayfah. This is further confirmed by the fact that it agrees with 'Ā'ishah's earlier report that the Prophet (ﷺ) did not pray more than eleven *rak'āt*. We would surely expect 'Umar's action to conform with the Prophet's (ﷺ) *Sunnah*, rather than assume that it conflicted with it.

3. Ibn Abī Thubāb's Report

Ibn 'Abd ul-Barr reported:

> "Al-Ḥārith Bin 'Abd ur-Raḥmān reported from Ibn Abī Thubāb from as-Sā'ib Bin Yazīd, '*Qiyām* during the time of 'Umar was twenty-three *rak'āt*.'" [1]

The *isnād* of this report is weak because of Ibn Abī Thubāb's poor memory. Ibn Abī Ḥātim said:

> "My father said, 'Ad-Dārawardī reported rejected *ḥadīths* from him (Abū Thubāb); he is not that strong; he records *ḥadīths* (from less trusted narrators).' And Abū Zar'ah said, 'He is passable.'" [2]

That is why Mālik would not accept this reports, as is mentioned by al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar [3]. Ibn Ḥajar also said, "He is truthful, but faulty." [4]

One cannot accept such a reporter's narrations, because of his likely errors, especially in the current report, which conflicts with that of a trustworthy and precise reporter, namely, Muḥammad Bin Yūsuf, who reported, "Eleven *rak'āt*," as preceded.

Furthermore, the status of the other narrators in the *isnād* of this report is not known, because Ibn 'Abd ul-Barr's book is not accessible for us to see the *isnād* and check the narrators.

1 *'Umdat ul-Qārī* 5:357.
2 *Al-Jarḥu wat-Ta'dīl* 1:2:80.
3 *At-Tahdhīb*.
4 *At-Taqrīb*.

4. Yazīd Bin Rūmān's Report

Yazīd Bin Rūmān reported:

> "The people stood in *qiyām* during the time of 'Umar with twenty-three *rak'āt*." [1]

In *al-Ma'rifah*, al-Bayhaqī indicated the weakness of this report by saying:

> "Yazīd Bin Rūmān did not encounter 'Umar."

Al-Ḥāfiẓ az-Zayla'ī agreed with this [2]. Also, an-Nawawī said, "Recorded by al-Bayhaqī, but it is *mursal*, because Yazīd Bin Rūmān did not encounter 'Umar." [3]

Similarly, al-'Aynī indicated its weakness by saying, "Its *isnād* is *munqaṭi'* (disconnected)." [4]

Thus, this report is weak because of the disconnection between Yazīd Bin Rūmān and 'Umar, and may not, therefore, be taken as evidence, especially since it conflicts with the authentic report from 'Umar that he commanded the people to pray eleven *rak'āt*.

5. Yaḥyā Bin Sa'īd's Report

Wakī' reported, from Mālik, from Yaḥyā Bin Sa'īd, that:

> "'Umar Bin al-Khaṭṭāb commanded a man to lead the people in prayer with twenty *rak'āt*." [5]

The *isnād* of this report is also disconnected. The great scholar al-Mubārakfūrī said:

1 Recorded by Mālik, al-Faryābī, and al-Bayhaqī (both in *as-Sunan* and *al-Ma'rifah*).
2 *Naṣb ur-Rāyah* 2:154.
3 *Al-Majmū'* 4:33.
4 *'Umdat ul-Qārī* 5:357.
5 Recorded by Ibn Abī Shaybah in *al-Muṣannaf* (2:89:2).

"An-Nīmawī said in *Āthār us-Sunan*, 'Its narrators are trustworthy; but Yaḥyā Bin Sa'īd al-Anṣārī did not encounter 'Umar.' This is true; and this report is therefore disconnected, and may not be taken as evidence. In addition, it conflicts with what was reported with authentic *isnād* that 'Umar (ﷺ) commanded Ubayy Bin Ka'b and Tamīm ad-Dārī to lead the people with eleven *rak'āt*. It also conflicts with what is confirmed from Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) with authentic *isnād*." [1]

Ash-Shāfi'ī and at-Tirmithī's Position

At-Tirmithī indicated that the twenty-*rak'āt*-number attributed to 'Umar (ﷺ) and other *saḥābah* is not authentic. He said, "It has been reported from 'Umar (ﷺ) and other companions of the Prophet." [2] Ash-Shāfi'ī said the same in regard to the twenty *rak'āt* attributed to 'Umar. [3]

A common convention among *Ḥadīth* specialists, among whom ash-Shāfi'ī and at-Tirmithī are considered to be, is that saying (*ruwiya* - it was reported) is an indication of the weakness of the report. An-Nawawī said:

> "Specialized scholars of *Ḥadīth* and other branches of knowledge agree that for a weak *ḥadīth*, one may not say, 'Allāh's Messenger said, did, commanded, prohibited, or any other statement indicating certitude." Similarly, one may not say for this kind of *ḥadīth*, 'Abū Hurayrah reported, said, mentioned, spoke, related, ruled, or similar things.' Such expressions may not be used either in reference to the *tābi'īn* or those who came after them. In all such cases, one should say, '*Ruwiya 'anhu* - it has been narrated from him; it has been transmitted from him; it has been related about

1 *Tuḥfat ul-Aḥwathī* 2:85.

2 *Sunan ut-Tirmithī*.

3 Reported by al-Muzanī in his *Mukhtaṣar* 1:107.

> him; we have been informed about him; it is said; it is mentioned; it is related; it is reported; it is conveyed;' or other similar expressions that indicate weakness, and that do not indicate certitude.
>
> The scholars also say that the expressions of certitude should only be applied to *ṣaḥīḥ* and *ḥasan* reports, whereas expressions that indicate weakness should be applied to all other reports. The reason for this is that expressions of certitude imply the truth of what is attributed to the pertinent persons; therefore they should not be applied except to what is true, lest the reporting person falls into lying.
>
> This rule has been violated by the author (of *al-Muhaththab*) and the multitudes of scholars from our companions and others. Rather, it is violated by great numbers of scholars of various branches of knowledge, except the most skillful among the scholars of *Ḥadīth*. This is indeed an ugly carelessness, because you find many of those frequently saying, 'It has been reported from him,' in regard to an authentic narration. Or they say, 'He said,' or 'He narrated,' for a weak narration. This constitutes deviation from the right approach." [1]

Weak Reports That Do Not Reinforce Each Other

Someone may argue, "We agree that these reports are individually weak. However, don't they collectively reinforce each other?"

The answer to this questions is, "No," for the two reasons discussed in the following.

1. The diversity of these reports is apparent and not real, because the only connected report we have is that of as-Sā'ib Bin Yazīd. The reports of Yazīd Bin Rūmān and Yaḥyā Bin Sa'īd al-Anṣārī are both disconnected; and it is likely that both of them terminate in one of the narrators from the first report. There are other possibilities as well. The existence of this

1 *Al-Majmū'* 1:63.

possibility invalidates the chance of deriving any evidence from these reports.

2. We have established earlier that Mālik's report from Muhammad Bin Yūsuf from as-Sā'ib of eleven *rak'āt* is the authentic one, and that whoever differs with Mālik or Muhammad Bin Yūsuf is mistaken. Thus the reports of Ibn Khuṣayfah and Ibn Abū Thubāb are both *shāth* (odd); and it is established in the field of *Ḥadīth* that odd reports should be rejected because they are faulty; and that which is faulty may not be used for reinforcement, as is mentioned by Ibn uṣ-Salāḥ:

"If a narrator is lone in reporting a peculiar report, and if this report conflicts with reports of more precise and meticulous narrators, his report is considered odd and rejected. However, if his report does not conflict with others, but only includes information not reported by them, and if he is a just, trustworthy, and meticulous narrator, his peculiar report is then acceptable." [1]

There is no doubt that the current reports belong to the first type, because their narrators conflict with the reports of those who are better and more precise than them. Therefore, they are rejected.

It is obvious that the reason for the scholars' rejection of odd reports is their conflict with authentic reports. Thus it does not make sense to use such clearly defective reports to reinforce other reports. This establishes that odd and *munkar* reports may not be used as evidence or witnesses for other reports: their existence brings no additional knowledge.

Furthermore, it is not possible to say that the two disconnected reports of Yazīd Bin Rūmān and Yaḥyā Bin Sa'īd reinforce each other, because the condition for this is that the narrators who dropped out the rest of the *isnād* are different [2].

1 *Al-Muqaddimah* p. 86.

2 Review *Natā'ij ul-Afkār* by as-San'ānī 1:288. This condition is also discussed in depth by al-Albānī in *Nasb ul-Majānīq*.

This condition does not hold in this case, because it is most likely that these two narrators, being both from al-Madīnah, have together reported from the same *shaykh*; and it is possible that their common *shaykh* is weak or unacceptable. Another possibility is that they received their reports from two different *shaykhs* who are both weak and unacceptable. It is further possible that their two *shaykhs* were Ibn Khuṣayfah and Ibn Abī Thubāb, both being from al-Madīnah too, and both being faulty in this report, as preceded — making Yazīd Bin Rūmān's and Yaḥyā Bin Sa'īd's reports faulty as well. All of this is possible; and the possibility causes the evidence to fall down. Ibn Taymiyyah (ﷺ) said:

"The scholars have differed whether to accept or reject the *mursal* reports. The most correct opinion is that some of them are acceptable, others are rejected, and others are *mawqūf* ... A *mursal* report that conflicts with the reports of trustworthy narrators is rejected. And if a *mursal* report is narrated by two narrators whose *shaykhs* are different, this confirms its truth, because one would not usually expect them to make identical errors." [1]

Neglecting this important condition has led some scholars to authenticate clearly invalid narrations, such as the story of *Gharānīq* [2]!

Possible Reconciliation

Some people try to reconcile between the above weak reports and the authentic report from 'Umar. They say, "The people at the time of 'Umar prayed eleven *rak'āt* at the beginning; they later prayed twenty

1 From an unprinted manuscript by al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn 'Abdulhādī in al-Maktabat uẓ-Ẓāhiriyyah in Damascus.

2 *Gharānīq* means idols. The story claims that Allāh (ﷻ) revealed some *āyāt* from *Sūrat un-Najm* praising the idols of Quraysh and confirming the value of their intercession! This story is found in some books of *tafsīr*!

rak'āt and three *witr*."

However, since we have established the weakness of these reports from 'Umar, there is no need to attempt such reconciliation — which should only be exercised when the reports are likely to be authentic. Rather, it is possible to dispute such a reconciliation, as al-Mubārakfūrī (ﷺ) said:

> "One might possibly say that they prayed twenty *rak'āt* at first, and later prayed eleven. This is more adequate because it agrees with what is confirmed from the Prophet (ﷺ), whereas the first practice conflicted with it." [1]

Reports from Other Companions

There are reports from other *ṣaḥābah* indicating that they prayed twenty *rak'āt*. However, none of these reports can withstand scholarly criticism. But since many people are deceived by them, it is important to establish their weakness and clarify their status.

Reports from 'Alī

1. Abū al-Ḥasnā''s Report

Abū al-Ḥasnā' reported that 'Alī (ﷺ) commanded a man to lead them in *Ramaḍān* with twenty *rak'āt* [2].

Al-Bayhaqī said, "The *isnād* of this report is weak." Its weakness comes from Abū al-Ḥasnā', about whom aṯh-Ṯhahabī said, "He is not known." And al-Ḥāfiẓ said, "He is not known (to the scholars)."

This report has another problem as well, which is the *i'ḍāl* [3] between Abū al-Ḥasnā' and 'Alī. Al-Ḥāfiẓ said about him, "He narrates from al-Ḥakam Bin 'Utaybah, from Ḥanash, from 'Ali in

1 *Tuḥfat ul-Aḥwaṯhī* 2:76.

2 Recorded by Ibn Abī Shaybah in *al-Muṣannaf* (2:90:1) and al-Bayhaqī (2:497).

3 Disconnection arising when two or more narrators are missing from the *isnād*.

regard to *udhiyah* (sacrifice)." [1] Thus in the current report, two narrators are missing between Abū al-Ḥasnā' and 'Alī.

2. Ḥammād Bin Shu'ayb's Report

Ḥammād Bin Shu'ayb reported from 'Aṭā' Bin as-Sā'ib, from Abī 'Abd ir-Raḥmān as-Sulamī:

> "'Alī (ﷺ) summoned the reciters in *Ramaḍān*, and commanded one of them to lead the people with twenty *rak'āt*. 'Alī would then lead them in the *witr*." [2]

This report is weak for three reasons:

a. 'Aṭā' Bin as-Sā'ib's reports became inconsistent (due to old age) — when Ḥammād Bin Shu'ayb narrated from him.

b. Ḥammād Bin Shu'ayb is very weak, as al-Bukhārī indicated, "He is questionable." And he said, "His reports are rejected." Al-Bukhārī does not make such statements except for those whose reports must be totally avoided. Thus this report may not be taken as a witness or evidence. [3]

c. Muḥammad Bin Fuḍayl, who is a trustworthy narrator, differed with Ḥammād in reporting this. Ibn Abī Shaybah narrated the same report from 'Aṭā', in an abbreviated form, saying, "'Alī led them in the *qiyām* prayer of *Ramaḍān*." This report does not have any mention of the number of *rak'āt*. Since Muḥammad Bin Fuḍayl is trustworthy, and did not report the same as Ibn Shu'ayb, the latter's report is considered weak according to the rules of *Ḥadīth* specialists.

1 *At-Tahḏhīb*.

2 Al-Bayhaqī 2:496.

3 Review this in *Tadrīb ur-Rāwī* by as-Suyūṭī, *Mukhtaṣaru 'Ulūm il-Ḥadīth* by Ibn Kathīr, *at-Taḥrīr* by Ibn ul-Hammām, *ar-Raf'u wat-Takmīl* by Abū al-Ḥasanāt, *Tuḥfat ul-Aḥwaṯhī* by al-Mubārakfūrī, etc. They all agree that this is what al-Bukhārī's means by such statements.

REPORTS FROM UBAYY BIN KA'B

1. 'Abd ul-'Azīz Bin Rafī''s Report

Ibn Abī Shaybah recorded in *al-Muṣannaf* with an authentic chain that 'Abd ul-'Azīz Bin Rafī' said:

> "Ubayy Bin Ka'b led the people in al-Madīnah in the *qiyām* of *Ramaḍān* with twenty *rak'āt* followed by three *witr*."

However, the *isnād* of this report is disconnected between 'Abd ul-'Azīz Bin Rafī' and Ubayy Bin Ka'b, the time difference between their deaths being about a hundred years or more [1]. The great Indian scholar, an-Nīmawī, said, "'Abd ul-'Azīz Bin Rafī' did not meet Ubayy Bin Ka'b." Al-Mubārakfūrī reported this statement and commented:

> "What an-Nīmawī said is true. This report from Ubayy is disconnected; furthermore, it conflicts with what has been confirmed from 'Umar that he commanded Ubayy Bin Ka'b and Tamīm ad-Dārī to lead the people with eleven *rak'āt*. It also conflicts with what has been confirmed from Ubayy that he led some women at his house in the *qiyām* of *Ramaḍān* with eight *rak'āt* and *witr*."

By this he refers to what he mentioned in the previous page of his book:

> "An evidence for this opinion of Mālik, i.e., the eleven *rak'āt*, is what is recorded by Abū Ya'lā from the *hadīth* of Jābir Bin 'Abdillāh that Ubayy Bin Ka'b said to Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), 'I have done something last night (of *Ramaḍān*).' He (ﷺ) said, «وما ذاك يا أبي؟» ‹What is it, Ubayy?› He replied, 'Some of the women

1 Review for example, *Tahthīb ut-Tahthīb*.

in my house told me, "We cannot read *Qur'ān*, so can you lead us in the prayer?" So I led them with eight *rak'āt* followed by *witr*.' The Prophet (ﷺ) did not say anything, which made it an approved *sunnah*. Al-Haythamī said about this report, 'Its *isnād* is *ḥasan*.' [1] "

2. Abū Ja'far ar-Rāzī's Report

Abū Ja'far ar-Rāzī reported, from ar-Rabī' Bin Anas, from Abī al-'Āliyah, from Ubayy Bin Ka'b that 'Umar commanded him to lead the people in the *qiyām* of *Ramaḍān*, saying, "The people fast during the day and are unable to recite (*Qur'ān*) well; so will you recite *Qur'ān* for them at night?" He replied, "O Commander of the Believers! This thing has not been done before!" 'Umar said, "I know, but it is better." So he led them with twenty *rak'āt*. [2]

The *isnād* of this report is weak. Abū Ja'far ar-Rāzī's name is 'Īsā Bin Abī 'Īsā Bin Māhān. Aṯh-Ṯhahabī included him in his book *aḍ-Ḍu'afā'* (the Weak Ones) and said, "Abū Zar'ah said, 'He makes frequent errors.' Aḥmad described him as, 'Not competent.' And once he said, 'He is passable.' Al-Fallās said, 'He is erroneous in reporting.' While someone else said, 'He is trustworthy.'"

Aṯh-Ṯhahabī also included him in his book *al-Kunā* and said, "All of the scholars of *Ḥadīth* have condemned him." And Ibn ul-Qayyim said, "He is known for his *munkar* reports. None at all among the scholars of *Ḥadīth* would accept his lone reports."

Any researcher in *Ḥadīth* can easily see this erroneous pattern of Abū Ja'far ar-Rāzī, because his reports frequently conflict with those of the trustworthy narrators [3].

In the current report, Abū Ja'far conflicts with the previously established authentic report of 'Umar (ﷺ) commanding Ubayy to lead the people with eleven *rak'āt*. One cannot imagine Ubayy departing

1 It is also recorded by Ibn Naṣr.

2 Recorded by aḍ-Ḍiyā' ul-Maqdisī in *al-Mukhtārah* (1:384).

3 Another example is his report that, "The Prophet (ﷺ) continued to make *qunūt* in fajr prayers until he departed from this life." This conflicts with Anas's (ﷺ) authentic report that, "The Prophet (ﷺ) would not make *qunūt* except when supplicating for some people or cursing some people."

from ʿUmar's authentic command, which conforms with the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (ﷺ).

Another problem with this report is that Ubayy said, "This thing has not been done before!" One cannot imagine Ubayy saying this, nor ʿUmar agreeing to it, when this was a practice of the Prophet (ﷺ) that both of them must have witnesses or known.

Report from Ibn Masʿūd

Zayd Bin Wahab (ﷺ) reported, "ʿAbdullāh Bin Masʿūd would lead us in the prayer during *Ramaḍān*, finishing the prayer while there was still some part of the night." Al-Aʿmash [1] added, "He prayed twenty *rakʿāt* and three *witr*." [2]

Al-Mubārakfūrī commented on this report, "This is also disconnected, because al-Aʿmash did not encounter Ibn Masʿūd." [3]

Al-Mubārakfūrī's statement is correct, for, even though the *isnād* of this report is authentic up to al-Aʿmash [4], there are either one or two narrators missing between him and Ibn Masʿūd.

What Was the Consensus of the Companions?

From the above discussion, it is clear that the *ṣaḥābah* (ﷺ) did not pray twenty *rakʿāt* for *tarāwīḥ*. Thus, there is no basis for the claim that, "The *ṣaḥābah* had a consensus that *tarāwīḥ* should be twenty *rakʿāt*." [5] Because of this, the great scholar al-Mubārakfūrī stated,

1 His name is Sulaymān Bin Mahrān. He was one of the great scholars of *Hadīth* and other branches of knowledge. He died in 147H.

2 Recorded by Ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī in *Qiyām ul-Layl* (p. 91). This is a very valuable book, whose author has recorded many reports that are hard to find in other compilations. This book was abbreviated by al-Maqrīzī, who dropped off the *isnāds* of many of the reports (including the current one), reducing its value, and making it hard to judge such reports. The book was printed in India.

3 *Tuḥfat ul-Aḥwathī* 2:75.

4 Al-ʿAynī included the *isnād* of this report, from Ibn Naṣr, in *ʿUmdat ul-Aḥkām* (5:357).

5 As, for example, in *ʿUmdat ul-Aḥkām* (5:357), *Mirqāt ul-Mafātīḥ* (2:175), etc.

"These claims are invalid." [1]

Similarly, there is no basis for the claim that, "There are *mutawātir* [2] reports that the *ṣaḥābah*, the *tābiʿūn*, and those who followed them until our time, have all prayed *qiyām* twenty *rakʿāt*." As established above, this is a false claim, because this number cannot be authentically attributed to any of the *ṣaḥābah*; rather, it conflicts with ʿUmar's command to pray eleven *rakʿāt*.

This should alert the scholars to be careful, and not to accept claims of *ijmāʿ* without proper verification. Many such claims have been proven false upon examination. Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān said:

> "The people have become extremely careless in reporting consensus. Thus, we find those who have little knowledge of the scholars' opinions presuming that what has been agreed upon in their *mathhab* or country is a consensus. This is indeed a great danger. By such indifferent claims, which are not based on careful study and piety, they cause a general harm to the Muslims.
>
> As for the followers of the Four *mathhabs*, they consider any matter agreed upon among them to be a consensus. This is especially apparent in the later scholars among them, such as an-Nawawī in his explanation of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*.
>
> This is not the type of *ijmāʿ* taken by the scholars as an evidence. The best generations: the first one (the *ṣaḥābah*), then the next, then the next, existed before the appearance of *mathhabs*. Also, during the time of each one of the Four *Imāms*, there were countless scholars doing *ijtihād* [3]. This continued in the succeeding generations. All of this is apparent for any fair and knowledgeable person. But it is unfortunate that fairness is a mighty barrier, which is not surmounted except by those for whom Allāh (ﷻ) has opened the gates to the truth. Ash-Shawkānī said in '*Wabal ul-*

1 *Tuḥfat ul-Aḥwathī* 2:76.

2 Reports having numerous authentic *isnāds*.

3 Derivation of rules from the available evidence.

Ghamām, Ḥāshiyatu Shifā' il-Awām':

'Matters of consensus reported in the books arise from situations where the reporter was not aware of the difference in regard to a specific matter. Being unaware does not necessitate that a difference did not exist. The best that could be said is that he assumed that there was a consensus. And a person's presumption is not sufficient as a basis or proof of consensus. Those who take the consensus as an evidence would not take such a presumption, coming from just a single member of this *Ummah*. Allāh (ﷻ) does not require this from His creatures. If a scholar says that he does not know any evidence from the *Qur'ān* or the *Sunnah* regarding a particular issue, his statement is not taken by any learned scholar as an evidence. If you understand this, it becomes easy for you to judge this kind of report about consensus.'" [1]

Also, the *imām* Abū Muḥammad Bin Ḥazm has discussed this issue in depth in his valuable book, "*Iḥkām ul-Aḥkām fī Uṣūl il-Aḥkām*", which is printed in eight volumes. One who likes to investigate claims of various issues of *ijmā'* should refer to it, because it is one of the best books of *fiqh* fundamentals, based on correct evidence from the Book and the *Sunnah*.

The Maximum Permissible Number

The Sunnah of the Prophet and His Companions

We have established that the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions (ﷺ) prayed eleven *rak'āt* in *qiyām*. This is the correct number that they have been reported to pray, without exceeding it, during *Ramaḍān* and at other times of the year.

There is no authentic report confirming that any of the *ṣaḥābah*

[1] *As-Sirāj ul-Wahhāj, min Kashfi Maṭālibi Ṣaḥīḥi Muslim Bin al-Ḥajjāj* 1:3.

prayed twenty *rak'āt* for *tarāwīḥ*. Rather, it is confirmed that 'Umar (ﷺ) commanded the people to pray eleven *rak'āt*, which conforms with the authentically reported practice of the Prophet (ﷺ). Therefore, it is obligatory to adhere to this number, without adding to it, following his (ﷺ) command:

«فإنه من يعش منكم من بعدي فسيرى اختلافا كثيرا. فعليكم بسنتي، وسنة الخلفاء المهديين الراشدين، تمسكوا بها، وعضوا عليها بالنواجذ، وإياكم ومحدثات الأمور فإن كل محدثة بدعة، وكل بدعة ضلالة.»

‹Those of you who will live after me will see considerable difference. So adhere to my *Sunnah*, and the *sunnah* of the Rightly Guided Successors; hold fast to it, bite on to it with your teeth, and beware of novel matters (in the *Dīn*), because every novel matter is a *bid'ah* (innovation), and every *bid'ah* is an act of misguidance.› [1]

To this last statement, he (ﷺ) added in another *ḥadīth*:

«وكل ضلالة في النّار.»

‹And every act of misguidance is in the fire.› [2]

It is well known that the scholars have differed in many matters of *fiqh*, among which is this issue of the number of *rak'āt* for *tarāwīḥ*. We find in this regard eight different opinions:

[1] Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmithī, Ibn Mājah, and al-Ḥākim, with various chains from al-'Irbāḍ Bin Sāriyah (ﷺ). It was judged to be authentic by at-Tirmithī, al-Ḥākim, ath-Thahabī, and others; and we concur with their judgement.

[2] Recorded by an-Nasā'ī, Abū Nu'aym (in *al-Ḥulyah*), and al-Bayhaqī (in *al-Asmā'u was-Ṣifāt*), with an authentic *isnād* from Jābir Bin 'Abdillāh. Note that some people mistakenly consider this as part of the previous *ḥadīth* of al-'Irbāḍ.

"Forty-one, thirty-six, thirty-four, twenty-eight, twenty-four, twenty, sixteen, and eleven *rakʿāt*." [1]

The above *hadīth* indicates the way to resolve any difference that appears among Muslims. Since this matter is something in which the people have differed, we should resolve it by referring to the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (ﷺ), which is nothing but to pray eleven *rakʿāt*. It is indeed an obligation to follow this, and drop anything that differs with it – especially since the *sunnah* of the Rightly Guided Successors (*Khulafā*) conforms with it as well.

Had additional *rakʿāt*, over the authentically reported eleven, been confirmed from any of the Rightly Guided Successors or others among the knowledgeable companions, we would then have conceded to their being permissible. The reason for this is that we trust their knowledge and virtue, their rejection of innovations in *Dīn*, and their great concern to forbid people from innovating.

However, since none of this was confirmed from them, as has been established above, we do not consider the addition permissible.

This, we hope, should provide a reminder for those who claim that they love the *ṣaḥābah* and desire to defend their teachings. A true defender of the *ṣaḥābah* would verify the reports from them, and then abide by them.

Does "More" Always Mean "Better?

We believe that adding to the correct number of *tarāwīḥ* conflicts with the *Sunnah*, because the acts of worship must be restricted to teachings of the *Qurʾān* and *Sunnah*, without allowing one to supplement or alter them based on conjecture and innovation.

One should realize that in many cases, "Too much is as bad as too little." An interesting narration that would be relevant in this regard is reported from Mujāhid, who said:

"A man came to Ibn ʿAbbās and said, 'I was traveling with one of my friends; I performed my prayer

1 Al-ʿAynī reported these opinions (5:356-357), and then mentioned that the last number is that chosen by Imām Mālik, as well as Abū Bakr Bin al-ʿArabī.

complete, and my friend made *qaṣr* (shortening the prayer).' Ibn ʿAbbās responded, 'Rather, it is you whose prayer was short, whereas your friend's prayer was complete!'" [1]

This shows the great understanding of Ibn ʿAbbās, when he indicated that the actual perfection and completion is in following the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (ﷺ), and true deficiency and inconsistency is in anything that differs with it, even if it were larger in number. This is not surprising from him, because Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) made *duʿā* for him by saying:

«اللّهم فقهه في الدين، وعلمه التأويل.»

‹O Allāh! Give him the understanding of *Dīn*, and teach him the knowledge of *Qurʾān*.› [2]

Indeed, a person with a true understanding cannot go beyond these words of Ibn ʿAbbās, but rather accept them as the rule in regard to everything in *Islām*. Anything contrary to this would lead to attributing incompleteness and imperfection to the Wise Legislator (Allāh); and verily:

﴿وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ نَسِيًّا﴾ مريم ٦٤

«Your Lord is never forgetful.» [3]

In his debate with the Shiite Ibn ul-Muṭahhar, Ibn Taymiyyah said:

"You claim that ʿAlī used to pray one thousand *rakʿāt* every day and night. This is not true. Our Prophet (ﷺ) would not pray at night more than thirteen *rakʿāt*. Also, it is not recommended to pray all night; rather it is disliked, because the Prophet (ﷺ) said to ʿAmr Bin al-

1 Recorded by Ibn Abī Shaybah in *al-Muṣannaf* (2:110:2).

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and others.

3 *Maryam* 19:64.

'Ās. «إن لجسدك عليك حقا.» ‹Your body has a right on you.›[1]

Furthermore, the Prophet (ﷺ) used to pray about forty *rak'āt* during the day and night. 'Alī's knowledge of the Prophet's (ﷺ) *Sunnah*, and his great concern to adhere to it, would not allow him to deviate from it — assuming that such a deviation is possible.

However, it is impossible to pray one thousand *rak'āt* and still perform all his other obligations; he has obligations toward himself: the needs of sleep, food, drink, toilet, *wuḍū'*, approaching his wives, looking after his family and subjects, etc., all of which would fill half of his time.

In the remaining half, he should pray about eighty *rak'āt* per hour. One cannot pray eighty *rak'āt* in one hour unless it is by reading the *Fātihah* only, and without serenity. 'Alī (ﷺ) is much better than to pray a prayer like that of the hypocrites, which is similar to the pecking of birds, and in which they seldom remember Allāh — as is reported in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ*s."[2]

Note how Ibn Taymiyyah elevates 'Alī (ﷺ) above possibly adding to the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (ﷺ) by saying, "'Alī's knowledge of the Prophet's (ﷺ) *Sunnah*, and his great concern to adhere to it, would not allow him to deviate from it."

Regulated *Nafl* Prayers

For *nafl* prayers, such as the regular *sunnah*, the *istisqā'* (asking for rain), and the *kusūf* (eclipse) prayers, the Prophet (ﷺ) maintained a definite number of *rak'āt*.

This practice is regarded by the scholars as a confirmed evidence that one may not exceed these numbers. For example, under the chapter of "The two *rak'āt* before *ẓuhr*", al-Bukhārī recorded the

[1] We found it from the report of Abū Juhayfah (ﷺ) that the Prophet (ﷺ) actually said this to Abū ad-Dardā'. It is recorded by al-Bukhārī and others.

[2] *Al-Muntaqā min Minhāj il-I'tidāl* p. 169-170.

hadīth narrated by Ibn 'Umar that:

"The Prophet (ﷺ) prayed two *rak'āt* before *ẓuhr*."

He followed this with the *hadīth* of 'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) that:

"The Prophet (ﷺ) did not neglect praying four *rak'āt* before *ẓuhr*."[1]

In *Fath ul-Bārī*, al-Ḥāfẓ explained that al-Bukhārī implied that these two *rak'āt* before *ẓuhr* are not a fixed limit that may not be exceeded. Al-Ḥāfẓ's statement clearly indicates that he believed that one may not exceed (without a clear evidence) the number of *rak'āt* set by the Prophet (ﷺ).

Likewise, one may not exceed the reported number of *rak'āt* in *tarāwīḥ*. Anyone who claims contrary to this needs to provide evidence for his claim; and that is not possible!

Tarāwīḥ prayer is not an unrestricted *nafl* prayer, and one may not pray it with any number that he chooses. Rather, it is a confirmed regulated *sunnah* prayer. The scholar Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī said:

"The difference between unrestricted *nafl* prayers and other prayers is that the earlier are not fixed with a specific number, leaving it open for the worshipper to do as much of them as he chooses."[2]

Since *tarāwī* has been fixed with a specific number (of eleven) that the Prophet (ﷺ) never exceeded, it is therefore a restricted *nafl* prayer, and one does not have the option to increase. According to an-Nawawī:

"*Tarāwīḥ* resembles the obligatory prayers in that it is

[1] According to the *Shāfi'ī*s, the correct *sunnah* before *ẓuhr* is two *rak'āt*. According to the *Hanafī*s, it is four. Since both of these numbers are confirmed from the Prophet (ﷺ), reconciliation between them may be done by saying that the minimum *sunnah* prayer is two, and that the four, which he (ﷺ) was not consistent in praying, are recommended.

[2] *Al-Fatāwī al-Kubrā* 1:193.

permitted to pray it in *jamāʿah*. Thus, it may not be changed from the way it has been established."[1]

THE MEANING OF BIDʿAH

Even if we admit that *tarāwīh* is an unrestricted *nafl* prayer, we would not be allowed to restrict it to a specific number (like twenty), because it is not permissible to adhere in acts of worship to a specific habit that was not practiced by the Prophet (ﷺ). Mullā Aḥmad ar-Rūmī said:

"If a practice was not adopted (by the Prophet ﷺ and his companions) during the First Generation, that means one of the following:

1) There was no need for it.
2) Something prevented them from performing it.
3) They were unaware of its importance.
4) They were lazy or did not have the desire to perform it.
5) It was not permissible.

The first two possibilities do not hold in the case of purely bodily worships, because the need to come closer to Allāh (ﷻ) never stops; and after *Islām* gained power, there was nothing to prevent performing them. Also, one cannot expect that the Prophet (ﷺ) was unaware or lazy in performing an act of worship. This is one of the worst thoughts, which leads to *kufr*. Thus the only remaining possibility is that such a practice is wrong and impermissible.

A similar thing can be said regarding acts of worships that were not practiced by the *ṣaḥābah*.

If an innovated practice were to be considered a good *bidʿah* for the mere reason that it is an act of worship, there would not then exist any bad *bidʿahs* in

1 Reported from an-Nawawī by al-Qasṭalānī in *Sharḥ ul-Bukhārī* (3:4) and al-Haythamī in *al-Fatāwī* (1:193).

worship! Furthermore, in that case, there would be no reason for the scholars to warn people from various innovated acts of worship, such as the *Raghāʾib* prayer, singing during the *khutbah*, *athān*, and *Qurʾānic* recitation, making loud *thikr* while walking with the funeral, etc.

Anyone who claims that such practices are good should be told that the good acts are only those whose goodness has been confirmed with proofs from the *sharʿ* — and therefore they would not count as *bidʿahs*."[1]

In this regard also, ʿAbdullāh Bin ʿUmar (رضي الله عنه) said:

«كل بدعة ضلالة، وإن رآها الناس حسنة.»

"Every *bidʿah* is an act of misguidance, even if the people see it good."[2]

STATEMENTS BY SOME SCHOLARLY

number of great scholars have held the position that it is not permissible to pray more than eleven. Among them is Imām Mālik (in one of the two reports from him). As-Suyūṭī said:

"Al-Jūrī[3], one of our companions, reported that Mālik said, 'The number of *rakʿāt* upon which ʿUmar Bin al-Khaṭṭāb gathered the people is more beloved to me — which is eleven *rakʿāt*. It is also the prayer of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ).' He was asked, 'Eleven *rakʿāt* including *witr*?' He replied, 'Yes; and thirteen *rakʿāt*

1 Reported by ʿAlī Maḥfūẓ in *al-Ibdāʿ fī Maḍārr il-Ibtidāʿ* (p. 21-22).

2 Recorded by al-Lālkāʾī, Ibn Naṣr (*As-Sunnah* p. 24), and al-Bayhaqī (*Al-Kubrā* no. 194). Verified to be authentic by Mashhūr Ḥasan Salmān (*Al-Amru bil-Ittibāʿ* p. 64).

3 There's a number of *Shāfiʿī* scholars who have this surname. It is not clear which one of them as-Suyūṭī meant here.

are close to that (in correctness) [1].' He then added, 'And I do not understand from where people have innovated this many *rak'āt*.'" [2]

Imām Ibn ul-'Arabī mentioned the conflicting reports from 'Umar, and the opinion that there is no fixed number for the *rak'āt* of *tarāwīh*. He then said:

"The correct position is to pray eleven *rak'āt*, which is the way the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed his *qiyām*. All other numbers have no basis or proof. If we were to set a limit, let it be the number that the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed. He (ﷺ) never prayed in *Ramadān* or in other months more than eleven *rak'āt*. This prayer is the *qiyām;* and one must imitate the Prophet (ﷺ) in praying it." [3]

Imām Muhammad Bin Ismā'īl as-San'ānī declared that the number twenty in *tarāwīh* is a *bid'ah*. He then said:

"And there is nothing praiseworthy in a *bid'ah*; rather, every *bid'ah* is an act of deviation." [4]

Refuting Some Doubts

Doubts are sometimes cast regarding some points in the above discussion. In what follows, we present the most common of those, followed by our clarification.

1. Difference among the Scholars

As mentioned above, the scholars have differed in regard to the

1 He refers here to some of the authentic reports from 'Ā'ishah that were cited earlier, which included the two *rak'āt* of *'Ishā'*.

2 *Al-Masābīh fī Salat it-Tarāwīh* (*Al-Fatāwī* 2:77).

3 *Sharh ut-Tirmithī* (4:19).

4 *Subul us-Salām*.

number of *rak'āt* of *tarāwīh*. Someone might say that this difference is an indication that there is no clear text fixing the number. As-Suyūtī expressed this doubt as follows:

"The scholars have differed in the number (for *tarāwīh*). If this were confirmed from the Prophet's (ﷺ) action, there would not have been such a difference — as is the case for *witr* and the regular *sunnah* prayers." [1]

The answer to this is that the reason for differing is not always that there is no established text from the Prophet (ﷺ). Among the other sources of difference are the following:

* The authentic text did not reach the scholar, causing him to provide his *fatwā* contrary to it.
* The authentic text reached the scholar with an *isnād* that he found unacceptable.
* The scholar understood the text differently from other scholars.
* Etc. [2]

Thus, the difference is not always caused by the absence of an authentic text. As is well known, the scholars have differed about many issues in spite of the existence of authentic *hadīths* in their regard.

One clear example is that of raising the hands during the prayer before and after *rukū'*. All the scholars agree that this is a recommended act, except the *Hanafīs*. This difference exists despite the fact that there are about twenty authentic *hadīths* proving it. Some of these *hadīths* are reported by some of the Rightly Guided Successors, such as 'Alī (ﷺ). And in one of those *hadīth*, Abū Humayd as-

1 *Al-Hāwī* 1:74.

2 The various reasons that cause the scholars to differ have been discussed in detail by various *'ulamā'*, including Ibn Taymiyyah, Waliyy Ullāh ad-Dahlawī, and al-Hamīdī.

Sā'idī (ﷺ) described the Prophet's (ﷺ) prayer in the presence of ten of the *ṣaḥābah*, and included raising the hands. When he finished, they told him, "You said the truth; this is how Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) prayed." [1]

In a well known discussion that took place between Abū Ḥanīfah and one of the scholars of *Ḥadīth*, as is recorded in the *Ḥanafī*'s books, Abū Ḥanīfah was asked why he does not adopt raising the hands; he replied, "Because there is no authentic *ḥadīth* from Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) about this."

Abū Ḥanīfah would never have said this had he known the various authentic *ḥadīths* that we described above. This is a clear proof that the difference in this issue is not caused by the absence of an authentic text, but that it did not reach the *imām* from an authentic source.

Thus, similar to the fact that the difference in this issue does not indicate the absence of an authentic text, so it is in the case of the *tarāwīḥ* prayer. In fact, earlier we established the existence of authentic texts, and it is not right to cast doubt on these texts because of the difference. Rather, our obligation is to remove the differences by referring to the authentic texts, as Allāh (ﷻ) commanded:

﴿فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا﴾

النساء ٦٥

«But No! By your Lord, they can have no faith until they make you judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept them with full submission.» [2]

And He (ﷻ) commanded:

﴿فَإِن تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī.

2 An-Nisā' 4:65.

تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا﴾

النساء ٥٩

«If you differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allāh and His Messenger, if you believe in Allāh and the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.» [1]

What then is the real reason for the scholars' difference in the number of *rak'āt* for *tarāwīḥ*? Our answer is that it is one of two possibilities, the first being more likely and common:

a. Unawareness of the authentic texts depicting the correct number. One who has this excuse is forgiven for not abiding by the text, as can be understood from the forthcoming *ḥadīth* of 'Amr Bin al-'Āṣ.

b. Misunderstanding or misinterpreting the text. For example, some scholars interpreted the *ḥadīth* of 'Ā'ishah, "He (ﷺ) would not pray more than eleven," to mean *witr* only. Of course, this is a wrong interpretation, because she said this in answer to a question, "How was the Messenger's (ﷺ) prayer in *Ramaḍān*?" Which indicates that her answer pertained to all of the night prayer, not merely *witr*. Besides, this interpretation would mean that he (ﷺ) had two night prayers, the *witr* with a maximum of eleven *rak'āt*, and the *qiyām* with an indefinite number of *rak'āt*! No scholar would agree to such classification.

2. No Text Prohibits Adding

Some people would say, "We realize the truth of the *ḥadīth* that the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed eleven *rak'āt* for *tarāwīḥ*. We also realize the weakness of the *ḥadīth* of twenty *rak'āt*. But we do not see why one may not add to eleven, since the Prophet (ﷺ) did not prohibit it."

1 An-Nisā' 4:59.

The answer to this doubt is that acts of worship may not be established without specific evidence (from the *Qur'ān* or *Sunnah*). This is a fundamental rule that is agreed upon among the scholars; and we cannot imagine a knowledgeable Muslim rejecting it.

If it were not for this rule, it would become possible for any Muslim to add, for example, as much as he wishes to the number of *rak'āt* of *sunnah* and *fard* prayers, even though these numbers were established by the action of the Prophet (ﷺ). His excuse would be that the Prophet (ﷺ) did not prevent adding to them! This is an obviously invalid argument, and we find no need to discuss it in more depth.

3. Reliance on General Texts

Some people rely on general texts that encourage praying without mentioning specific numbers of *rak'āt*. For example, they cite the Prophet's (ﷺ) instruction to Rabī'ah Bin Ka'b (ﷺ) (when he asked him to be in his company in *Jannah*):

«فأعني على نفسك بكثرة السجود.»

‹Help me against yourself with plentiful *sujūd* (prostration).› [1]

Or they cite Abū Hurayrah's *hadīth*:

"The Prophet (ﷺ) used to encourage people to pray the *qiyām* of *Ramadān*."

They cite these and other similar general *hadīths* that indicate the recommendation to pray, without specifying a number.

This is very feeble reasoning, because general texts may be applied in their general sense only if there are no other texts to restrict them. The number of *rak'āt* for *tarāwīh* has been restricted by clear texts from the Prophet (ﷺ). It is not permissible to annul this restriction, claiming that *tarāwīh* follows general recommendations. Anyone claiming such a thing might as well pray *zuhr* five *rak'āt* for example,

1 Recorded by Muslim and Abū 'Uwānah.

or make two *sujūds* or three *rukū's* in each *rak'ah*, because there are general texts describing the virtue of all these actions!

The great scholar 'Alī Mahfūz said:

"It is wrong to follow general texts, without referring to the Messenger's clarification through his actions or abstinence. This constitutes following doubtful matters, which Allāh prohibited.

If we rely on general texts, and neglect the clarification (of the Prophet), we would open by that a very wide gate of *bid'ah* that is not possible to shut, letting loose innovations in the *Dīn* without limits!

For example, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«الصلاة خير موضوع، فمن استطاع أن يستكثر فليستكثر.»

‹The prayer is the best subject. Anyone who can increase in it, let him do so.› [1]

If we hold to the general meaning of this *hadīth*, we cannot reject the ugly *bid'ah* of *ar-Raghā'ib* prayer or the prayer of *Sha'bān* …

If one likes to give *athān* for the *'Īd*, *kusūf*, or *tarāwīh* prayers, how can we then stop him, and say that the Prophet (ﷺ) never did that throughout his life, when the response would be that *athān* is and act of *da'wah* and *thikr*, both of which are recommended in *Islām*? …

Indeed, whatever the Prophet (ﷺ) avoided, despite the need and ability to do it, then avoiding it is a *sunnah*, and doing it is a *bid'ah*." [2]

4. Belittling the Great Scholars?

When we strongly insist on adhering to the number for *tarāwīh*

1 Recorded by at-Tabarānī in *al-Awsat* with a *hasan* chain from Abū Hurayrah.
2 *Al-Ibdā'* p.25.

established in the *Sunnah*, this does not mean at all that we belittle the scholars who accepted the additional numbers, or that we attribute innovation to them.

As expressed above (under Doubt-1), we do not believe that the great scholars based their opinions on desires, but on true scholarship and patient striving to reach the truth. Thus, they will be rewarded in all situations (*in shā'a 'Llāh*), as 'Amr Bin al-'Āṣ reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إذا حكم الحاكم فاجتهد فأصاب فله أجران، وإذا حكم فاجتهد فأخطأ فله أجر واحد.»

‹When a *ḥākim* [1] makes a judgement with *ijtihād*, and arrives at the truth, he receives two rewards. And if he makes a judgement with *ijtihād*, and misses the truth, he receives a single reward.› [2]

We cannot deny the scholars' bounty over us; they are the ones who have guided us through our pursuit of knowledge, and have taught us the importance of the Book and the *Sunnah*, and that we should value these two over any opinions that differ with them. *Imām* ash-Shāfi'ī, for example, says:

> "Muslims have a consensus that when a *sunnah* from Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) becomes clear to a person, it is not permissible for him to leave it for anybody's opinion." [3]

Furthermore, differing with some of the scholars in this matter does not mean that we consider ourselves superior to them in knowledge and understanding. That is not true, but is rather an invalid assumption.

We know with certitude that the Four *Imāms* are more

1 *Ḥākim* is one who has the ability and authority to make *ḥukm* (ruling or judgement) in one or more matters. This normally applies to a ruler, a judge, or a scholar.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

3 *Ar-Risālah*.

knowledgeable than their students and those who came after them. Yet, their students differed with them on many issues. And this continues to happen in every succeeding generation: later scholars differing with earlier ones — as long as there continue to be knowledgeable scholars among the Muslims. When these students differed with their teachers, no one understood that they claimed to be better than them.

In fact, our position with these *imāms* is as expressed by 'Āṣim Bin Yūsuf [1], who was told, "There are numerous issues in which you differ with Abū Ḥanīfah." He replied:

> "Abū Ḥanīfah has been given (of knowledge and understanding) that which we have not been given. His understanding reached a level that we cannot reach. As for us, our understanding cannot go beyond our level. And we cannot make a *fatwā* according to his sayings unless we understand his basis for what he said." [2]

'Āṣim refers here to Abū Ḥanīfah's famous statement, "It's not permissible for any one to adopt our opinion unless he knows on what we based it." So, in reality, he is adhering to Abū Ḥanīfah, even when he differs with him!

We say the above while, at the same time, we assert that Allāh's mercy is wider than to restrict knowledge and virtue to these Four Imāms only. Allāh (ﷻ) is indeed capable of creating after them those who are more knowledgeable in some issues. Also, a lesser person could possess knowledge that a better person does not possess. This is well recognized among the scholars; and the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«أمتي كالمطر، لا يدرى الخير في أوله أم في آخره.»

‹My nation is like rain; it is not possible to tell whether the goodness is in its beginning or its end.› [3]

1 He was a student of the two great *imāms*, Muḥammad and Abū Yūsuf.

2 Reported by al-Fillānī in *Īqāẓ ul-Himam* (p. 51-52) from the scholar Abū al-Layth as-Samarqandī.

3 Recorded by at-Tirmithī (who verified it to be *ḥasan*), al-'Uqaylī, and others, with various *isnāds*.

Safety in Adhering to the *Sunnah*

Regardless of what arguments are presented for or against adding to the reported number of *rakʿāt*, no Muslim should hesitate in acknowledging that the best number to pray is that confirmed from the Prophet (ﷺ), as he (ﷺ) said:

«وخير الهدي هدي محمد.»

‹The best guidance is Muhammad's (ﷺ).› [1]

Nothing should prevent the Muslims today from adhering to this *sunnah*, thereby fulfilling the Prophet's (ﷺ) instruction:

«دع ما يريبك إلى ما يريبك.»

‹Leave what gives you doubt, for that which does not give you doubt.› [2]

This should be further emphasized when we realize that most Muslims who perform *tarāwīḥ* as twenty *rakʿāt* abuse this prayer by performing it so fast as to lose all form of *khushūʿ* (devotion) and serenity. By that, they make all of their prayer liable to being annulled and rejected. Had they only prayed the correct number confirmed in the *Sunnah*, spending the same amount of time to perform it, their prayer would be more correct and acceptable by any scholar's judgement. Jābir (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«أفضل الصلاة طول القنوت.»

‹The best prayer is that with long *qunūt* (standing) [3].› [4]

1 Recorded by Muslim.
2 Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmithī, and others, with an authentic *isnād*.
3 This is one of the meanings of *qunūt*. Refer to Chapter 7 for more discussion of this.
4 Recorded by Muslim and others.

Praying less than Eleven *Rakʿāt*

We have thus far established that it is not permissible to pray *qiyām* with more than eleven *rakʿāt*. An important question that remains to be answered is whether it is permissible to pray less than eleven. The answer is, "Yes," as the Prophet's (ﷺ) practice and words indicate.

As for the practice, ʿAbdullāh Bin Abī Qays reported that he asked ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ), "How many (*rakʿāt*) did Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) pray *witr*?" She replied:

"He prayed *witr* four [1] and three (*rakʿāt*), or six and three, or ten and three; he would not pray *witr* less than seven, nor more than thirteen." [2]

This *hadīth* of ʿĀ'ishah indicates that what was reported from her in another narration — that the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed three *rakʿāt* for *witr* – means three, preceded by four. Aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī recorded from her with an authentic *isnād* that she said, "*Witr* used to be seven (*rakʿāt*), or five, or three incomplete." Aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī commented:

"She disliked praying *witr* three *rakʿāt* only, not preceded by others."

And as for the Prophet's (ﷺ) words, Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«الوتر حق، فمن شاء فليوتر بخمس، ومن شاء فليوتر بثلاث، ومن شاء فليوتر بواحدة.»

‹*Witr* is true (as a recommended act of worship). Anyone who wishes may pray five (*rakʿāt*); and

1 The first two of them were the *sunnah* prayers after *ʿIshā'*, or two light *rakʿāt* that the Prophet (ﷺ) performed before *qiyām*. This is also the view of al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Hajar.
2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, Aḥmad and others with a good chain of narrators. It is authenticated by al-Ḥāfiẓ al-ʿIrāqī in *Takhrīj ul-Iḥyā'*.

anyone who wishes may pray three; and anyone who wishes may pray one.› [1]

This is a clear text which permits reducing *witr* to just one *rakʿah*. The *salaf* practiced this sometimes, as indicated by al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar:

> "It is authentically reported that a number of the *ṣaḥābah* prayed one *rakʿah* for *witr*, without praying any *nafl* prior to it. It is recorded in Muḥammad Bin Naṣr's book and others, with an authentic *isnād* from as-Sāʾib Bin Yazīd, that ʿUthmān recited *Qurʾān* one night in just one *rakʿah*; and he did not pray anything else. We will also cite in the chapter of *al-Maghāzī* the report of ʿAbdullāh Bin Thaʿlabah that Saʿd prayed one *rakʿah* for *witr*, and in *al-Manāqib* the report that Muʿāwiyah prayed one *rakʿah* for *witr*, which was approved by Ibn ʿAbbās." [2]

This clearly refutes the claims of some *Ḥanafī*s that the Muslims have unanimously agreed that *witr* should be three *rakʿāt*. [3]

1 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī, al-Ḥākim, and others. The chain of this *ḥadīth* is authentic, as is verified by al-Ḥākim, a<u>th</u>-<u>Th</u>ahabī, Ibn Ḥibbān, and others.

2 *Fatḥ ul-Bārī*.

3 Review *Fatḥ ul-Bārī* (2:385), and *Naṣb ur-Rāyah* (2:122).

CHAPTER 6

MANNER OF PRAYING *QIYĀM* [1]

Supplication for Starting Qiyām [2]

There are various supplications and *<u>th</u>ikr*s for starting the prayer reported from the Prophet (ﷺ). In particular, there are some that he used to say at the beginning of *qiyām*. It is recommended to learn at least one of them. Learning more would allow practicing the *Sunnah* in a better way by saying them at various times. In what follows we present three such reports.

1. Ibn ʿAbbās's Report

Ibn ʿAbbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that when the Prophet (ﷺ) got up for the prayer in the depth of night, he would say:

«اللهُمَّ لكَ الحمد أنْتَ قَيِّمُ السَّماواتِ والأرض ومَن فِيهِنَّ، ولَكَ الحَمْدُ أنْتَ نُورُ السَّماواتِ والأرض ومَن فِيهِنَّ، ولَكَ الحَمْدُ أنْتَ مَلِكُ السَّماواتِ والأرض ومَن فِيهِنَّ، ولَكَ الحَمْدُ، أنتَ الحقُّ، ووعدُكَ الحقُّ، ولِقاؤُكَ حَقٌّ، وقولُكَ حَقٌّ، والجَنَّةُ حقٌّ، والنَّارُ حقٌّ، والنَّبيونَ حَقٌّ، ومُحَمَّدٌ حَقٌّ، والساعَةُ حَقٌّ، اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ أسلَمْتُ، وبِكَ آمَنتُ، وعَلَيْكَ تَوكَّلْتُ، وإلَيْكَ أنبتُ، وبِكَ خاصَمْتُ، وإلَيْكَ حاكَمتُ، فاغفِرْ لي ما قدَّمتُ وما أخَّرتُ، وما

1 The first and last sections of this chapter are not from al-Albānī's two works.

2 See the above footnote.

أسررْتُ وما أعلنتُ، وما أنتَ أعلمُ به مني، أنتَ المُقدِّمُ،
وأنتَ المُؤخِّرُ، لا إلـه إلاَّ أنتَ، ولا إلـه غيرُك»

‹Allāhumma lak al-ḥamdu, anta qayyim us-samāwāti wal-Arḍi waman fīhinn, walak al-ḥamdu, anta nūr us-samāwāti wal-Arḍi waman fīhinn, walak al-ḥamdu, anta malik us-samāwāti wal-Arḍi waman fīhinn, walak al-ḥamdu, ant al-ḥaqqu, wa-wa'duk al-ḥaqqu, wa-liqā'uka ḥaqqun, wa-qawluka ḥaqqun, wal-jannatu ḥaqqun, wan-nāru ḥaqqun, wan-nabiyyūna ḥaqqun, wa muḥammadun ḥaqqun, was-sā'atu ḥaqq.

Allāhumma lak aslamtu, wa-bika āmantu, wa-'alayka tawakkaltu, wa-ilayka anabtu, wa-bika khāṣamtu, wa-ilayka ḥākamt. Faghfir lī mā qaddamtu, wa-mā akhkhartu, wa-mā asrartu, wa-mā a'lantu, wa-mā anta a'lamu bihī minnī. Ant al-muqaddimu, wa-ant al-mu'akhkhiru, lā ilāha illā anta, walā ilāha ghayruk —

O Allāh! All praise belongs to You; You are the Custodian of the heavens and the earth and all that is therein. And all praise belongs to You; You are the Lighter of the heavens and the earth and all that is therein. And all praise belongs to You; You are the Sovereign of the heavens and the earth and all that is therein. And all praise belongs to You; You are the Truth; Your promise is the truth; meeting You (in the hereafter) is true; Your speech is true; *Jannah* is true; the Fire is true; the prophets are true; Muḥammad is true; and the Hour (of doom) is true.

O Allāh! I submit myself to You, believe in You, rely on You, turn into You, fight for You, and arbitrate to You. So forgive what I have done in the past or will do in the future, what I hide or declare, and what You know better than me (of what I did). You are the one who brings (some people) forward, and move (others) back. There is no (true) god

except You, and there is no (true) god other than You.› [1]

2. 'Āishah's Report

'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) reported that when the Prophet (ﷺ) got up at night (to pray), he would open his prayer by saying:

«اللهُمَّ ربَّ جِبريلَ وميكائيلَ وإسرافيلَ، فاطِرَ
السَّماواتِ والأرضِ، عالمَ الغَيبِ والشَّهادةِ، أنتَ تحكُم
بينَ عِبادِكَ فيما كانوا فيه يختلِفونَ، اهْدِني لِما اختُلِفَ
فيه منَ الحقِّ بإذْنِكَ، إنَّكَ تَهْدِي مَنْ تَشاءُ إلى صراطٍ
مُسْتَقِيمٍ»

‹Allāhumma rabba jibrīla wa-mīkā'īla wa-isrāfīl, fāṭir as-samāwāti wal-arḍ, 'ālim al-ghaybi wash-shahādah, anta taḥkumu bayna 'ibādika fīmā kānū fīhi yakhtalifūn. Ihdinī lima 'khtulifa fīhi min al-ḥaqqi bi-ithnika, innaka tahdī man tashā'u ilā ṣirāṭin mustaqīm —

O Allāh, Lord of Jibrīl, Mīkā'īl, and Isrāfīl, Creator of the heavens and the earth, knower of the hidden and witnessed things, You will judge among your servants about that wherein they used to differ. Guide me to the truth in matters of difference, with your permission, You guide whomever You will to a straight path.› [2]

3. Abū Sa'īd's Report

Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (ﷺ) reported that when the Prophet (ﷺ) got up for *qiyām*, he would start the prayer by saying *Allāhu akbar*, then

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[1] Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

[2] Recorded by Muslim.

before reciting *Qur'ān*, he would say:

«سُبحانَكَ اللهمَّ وبحمدِكَ وتباركَ اسمُكَ، وتعالى جدُّكَ، ولا إلهَ غيرُكَ، لا إلـهَ إلاَّ اللّهُ، لا إلـهَ إلاَّ اللّهُ، لا إلـهَ إلاَّ اللّهُ، اللّهُ أكبرُ كبيراً، اللّهُ أكبرُ كبيراً، اللّه أكبرُ كبيراً، أعوذ باللّهِ السَّميعِ العَليمِ منَ الشَّيطانِ الرَّجيمِ من همزِهِ ونفخِهِ ونفثِهِ»

‹***Subhānak allāhumma wa-bihamdika, wa-tabārak asmuka, wa-ta'ālā jadduka, wa-lā ilāha ghayruk.***
***Lā ilāha illallāh.* (Three times)**
***Allāhu akbaru kabīrā.* (Three times)**
***A'ūthu billāh is-samī' il-'alīmi min ash-shayṭān ir-rajīm, min hamzihi wa-nafkhihi wa-nafthih* —**
Exalted are You, my God; all praise belongs to You, hollowed is Your name; great is Your honor; and there is no (true) deity but you.
There is no (true) god except Allāh. (Three times)
Allāh is the Greatest — He is great indeed. (Three times)
I seek refuge with Allāh, the All-Hearing, All-Knowing, from the outcast Satan — from his spurring, blowing, and breathing.› [1]

Recitation During *Qiyām*

The Prophet's Practice

The Prophet (ﷺ) did not fix the length of recitation for *qiyām*. His recitation varied in length; it was sometimes short, more often long, and extremely long on some occasions. Ibn Mas'ūd (ﷺ) said:

1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmithī, and an-Nasā'ī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāt* no. 1217).

"I prayed with the Prophet (ﷺ) one night. He stood (in recitation) for so long that I was inclined to do something wrong."

He was asked, "What were you inclined to do?" And he replied, "I was inclined to sit down and let him pray alone." [1]

Ḥuthayfah Bin al-Yamān (ﷺ) reported:

"I prayed with the Prophet (ﷺ) one night; he started reciting *sūrat ul-Baqarah* (2). I said to myself, 'He will make *rukū'* after one hundred *āyāt*'. But he carried on; so I thought, 'He will finish it (the *sūrah*) in two *rak'āt*.' But he carried on; so I thought, 'He will make *rukū'* when he has finished it.' But he started *sūrat un-Nisā'* (4) and recited it all; then he started *sūrat Āl-'Imrān* (3) and recited it all. He was reciting slowly; when he read an *āyah* in which there was glorification of Allāh, he glorified Him; when an *āyah* called for asking (of Allāh), he asked; when an *āyah* called for seeking refuge (with Allāh), he sought refuge. Then he made *rukū'* ..." [2]

One night when the Prophet (ﷺ) was ill, he (ﷺ) recited the seven long *sūrahs*: *al-Baqarah* (2), *Āl 'Imrān* (3), *an-Nisā'* (5), *al-Mā'idah* (4), *al-An'ām* (6), *al-A'rāf* (7), and *at-Tawbah* (8). [3]

Also, the Prophet (ﷺ) would sometimes recite one of these *sūrahs* in each *rak'ah* [4]. He (ﷺ) would sometimes recite in one *rak'ah* the amount of *sūrat ul-Muzzammil* (73), which is twenty *āyāt* [5]; other

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
2 Recorded by Muslim and an-Nasā'ī.
3 Recorded by Abū Ya'lā and al-Ḥākim. Verified authentic by the latter, ath-Thahabī, and al-Albānī (in *Sifat uṣ-Ṣalāh*).
4 Recorded by an-Nasā'ī and Abū Dāwūd. Verified authentic by al-Albānī (in *Ṣifat uṣ-Ṣalāh*).
5 Recorded by Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd. Verified authentic by al-Albānī (in *Ṣifat uṣ-Ṣalāh*).

before reciting *Qur'ān*, he would say:

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‹Subḥānak allāhumma wa-biḥamdika, wa-tabārak asmuka, wa-ta'ālā jadduka, wa-lā ilāha ghayruk.
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1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
2 Recorded by Muslim and an-Nasā'ī.
3 Recorded by Abū Ya'lā and al-Ḥākim. Verified authentic by the latter, ath-Thahabī, and al-Albānī (in *Sifat uṣ-Ṣalāh*).
4 Recorded by an-Nasā'ī and Abū Dāwūd. Verified authentic by al-Albānī (in *Ṣifat uṣ-Ṣalāh*).
5 Recorded by Ahmad and Abū Dāwūd. Verified authentic by al-Albānī (in *Ṣifat uṣ-Ṣalāh*).

times he would recite about fifty or more *āyāt* [1]. And he (ﷺ) said:

«من صلى في ليلة بمئة آية لم يكتب من الغافلين.»

‹Whoever prays reciting one-hundred *āyāt* in one night, he will not be recorded among the heedless.› [2]

In another narration:

«من صلى في ليلة بمئتي آية فإنه يكتب من القانتين المخلصين.»

‹Whoever prays reciting two hundred *āyāt*, he will be recorded among the devoted and sincere.› [3]

'Umar's Practice

As established earlier, when 'Umar (ﷺ) commanded Ubayy Bin Ka'b (ﷺ) to lead the people in prayer during *Ramaḍān* with eleven *rak'āt*, Ubayy used to recite hundreds of *āyāt*, until those behind him would lean on their staffs because of the length of standing; and they would only finish with the approach of *fajr*. [4]

It is also confirmed that 'Umar (ﷺ) summoned the reciters of *Ramaḍān* and ordered the quicker of them to recite thirty *āyāt* (in one *rak'ah*), the moderate to recite twenty-five *āyāt*, and the slower to recite twenty *āyāt*. [5]

Correct Length of Recitation

The longer the *qiyām* prayer, the better. Thus, when one prays alone,

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Abū Dāwūd.

2 Recorded by ad-Dārimī and al-Ḥākim. Verified authentic by the latter, ath-Thahabī, and al-Albānī (in *Ṣifat uṣ-Ṣalāh*).

3 Recorded by ad-Dārimī and al-Ḥākim. Verified authentic by the latter, ath-Thahabī, and al-Albānī (in *Ṣifat uṣ-Ṣalāh*).

4 Recorded by Mālik, and discussed earlier in the book.

5 This *hadith*, recorded by 'Abd ur-Razzāq and al-Bayhaqī, was discussed earlier as well.

he is encouraged to make his recitation as long as possible. The same holds true when one prays with those who do not mind a lengthy recitation. The only restriction in such cases is that one should not pray the whole night except on rare occasions. This is in accordance with the Prophet (ﷺ) who said:

«وَخَيْرَ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ.»

‹The best guidance is that of Muḥammad.› [1]

On the other hand, when one prays as *imām* (leader), he should only lengthen the recitation to an extent that would not be a burden on those praying with him. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إذا ما قام أحدكم للناس فليخفف الصلاة، فإن فيهم الكبير وفيهم الصغير، وإذا قام وحده فليطل صلاته ما شاء.»

‹When one of you leads the people, he should shorten the prayer; among them are the young, the old, the weak, the sick, and those who have needs to fulfill. And when he stands alone, let him lengthen his prayer as he wishes.› [2]

Recitation in the Three Rak'āt of Witr

The Prophet's *Sunnah* (way) for the three *rak'āt* of *witr* was to recite *sūrat ul-A'lā* (87) in the first *rak'ah*, *sūrat ul-Kāfirūn* (109) in the second, and *sūrat ul-Ikhlāṣ* (112) in the third. Sometimes he would add to the latter: *sūrat ul-Falāq* (113) and *sūrat an-Nās* (114). Once he (ﷺ) recited one hundred *āyāt* from *sūrat un-Nisā'* (3) in the last *rak'ah* of *witr*. [3]

1 Recorded by Muslim and an-Nasā'ī.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

3 Recorded by an-Nasā'ī and Aḥmad with an authentic chain.

The Time of Qiyām

The time of *qiyām* is from after *'ishā'* prayer up to *fajr* prayer. Abū Baṣrah (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إن اللّه زادكم صلاة، وهي الوتر؛ فصلّوها بين صلاة العشاء إلى صلاة الفجر.»

‹Indeed Allāh added a prayer for you: it is *witr*; so pray it between *'ishā'* and *fajr*.› [1]

However, one should try to pray it in the later part of the night, because that is better then the earlier part, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«من خاف أن لا يقوم من آخر اللّيل فليوتر أوله، ومن طمع أن يقوم آخره فليوتر آخر اللّيل، فإن صلاة آخر اللّيل مشهودة، وذلك أفضل.»

‹Whoever fears that he will not wake up in the later part of the night, let him perform *witr* in the first part of it. And whoever expects to wake up in the later part of the night, let him pray it then. Indeed the prayer at the later part of the night is witnessed (by the angels), and that is better.› [2]

If one has a choice of praying in the first part of the night with a *jamā'ah* (congregation) or the later part alone, then praying with the *jamā'ah* is better, because it counts as if he prayed the whole night — as was established earlier (p. 41, 42). This was the practice of the companions during the time of 'Umar (ﷺ), as was cited earlier from the report of 'Abd ur-Raḥmān Bin 'Abd al-Qārī (p. 43). Also, Zayd Bin Wahb said:

1 Recorded by Aḥmad and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī in *as-Ṣaḥīḥah* (no. 108) and *Irwā' ul-Ghalīl* (2:158)

2 Recorded by Muslim and others.

"'Abdullāh Bin Mas'ūd used to lead us in the month of *Ramaḍān*; and he would finish while it was still night." [1]

As was mentioned earlier, Imām Aḥmad was asked, "Should we delay *qiyām* till the end of the night?" In response, he expressed his understanding of this and the previous report by saying, "No; the *sunnah* of the Muslims is dearer to me." [2]

Various Ways of Performing *Qiyām*

The Prophet (ﷺ) prayed *qiyām* and *witr* in various manners. This is not recorded in most *fiqh* books — whether abbreviated or detailed. It is important to clarify this *sunnah* to the people, so that its lovers will have the chance to follow it, and those who deny any of it because of ignorance will take heed. May Allāh (ﷻ) enable us to follow His Prophet (ﷺ) in the best way, and avoid the innovations from which he warned us.

Therefore, we present in the following the various manners in which the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed *qiyām*, as confirmed by authentic narrations.

After Ibn Khuzaymah mentioned a number of *ḥadīth*s describing the manner of praying *qiyām*, he concluded:

> "One is permitted to pray any of the various numbers of *rak'āt* that the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed, and in the manners that he did. No blame may be directed to the person who chooses to pray in any of these manners." [3]

Summary of the Various Methods

In the following table, we present the various methods, reported from the Prophet (ﷺ), for praying *qiyām*. The succeeding notes explain

1 Recorded by 'Abd ur-Razzāq with an authentic *isnād*.

2 Reported by Abū Dāwūd in his *Masā'il*.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Khuzaymah* 2:194.

some obscure points. The references are numbered after the *hadīths* in the next subsection.

	Total	Pre	Core	Post	Ref	Note
1	13	2	2,2,2,2,2,1	0	1,2, 3	Start with very long pair; gradually shorten next pairs.
2	13	2	2,2,2,5	0	4	The last five have only one sitting and *taslīm* at the very end.
3	11	0	2,2,2,2,2,1	0	5,6	
4	11	0	4,4,3	0	7	The fours are prayed with a sitting and *taslīm* in their middle.
5	11	0	9	2	8	The nine are prayed without sitting except on the eighth, then on the last one.
6	9	0	7	2	8	The seven are prayed without sitting except on the sixth, then on the last one.

Notes:

- "Pre" refers to the two *rakʿāt* that preceed *qiyām*. They are relatively short.
- "Core" refers to the main body of the *qiyām* prayer. It is divided to different numbers of *rakʿāt* as reported in the *Sunnah*.
- "Post" refers to the two *rakʿāt* that follow *witr*, which the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed while sitting. They will be further discussed near the end of this chapter.
- The best method (which should be applied most frequently), is the

first, or one of its variations (such as the third).

- Other methods can be deduced from the above by decreasing the number of *rakʿāt* in any of the preceding methods, in multiples of two *rakʿāt*, down to a minimum of only one *rakʿah*.

This derives from the Prophet's (ﷺ) previous saying (p. 89):

«فمن شاء فليوتر بخمس، ومن شاء فليوتر بثلاث،
ومن شاء فليوتر بواحدة.»

‹One may pray it as five, three, or one *rakʿah*.›

This *ḥadīth* provides a clear proof that it is permissible to pray *witr* with these three numbers, even though none of them has been reported from the Prophet's (ﷺ) action — rather, ʿĀishah (ﷺ) confirms in a previously cited report (p. 89) that he (ﷺ) never prayed *witr* less than seven *rakʿāt*.
One may pray these five or three *rakʿāt* as follows:

a) With one sitting and *taslīm*, as in the second method above,

b) Sitting without *taslīm* after every pair of *rakʿāt*, as in the fourth method above (this may not be done in the case of the three *rakʿāt*, as will be explained below),

c) Make *taslīm* after every pair of *rakʿāt*, as in the third and other methods above. This is the best way.

Evidence from Ḥadīths

1. Zayd Bin Khālid al-Juhanī reported:

> "One night, I decided to closely observe the way the Messenger (ﷺ) performed his night prayer.
> So he prayed two short *rakʿāt*, then two extremely long *rakʿāt*, then two *rakʿāt* shorter than the preceding two,

then two rak'āt shorter than the preceding two, then two rak'āt shorter than the preceding two, then two rak'āt shorter than the preceding two, then (one) witr. This totalled to thirteen rak'āt."[1]

2. Ibn 'Abbās (ﷺ) reported:

> "I spent one night in Allāh's Messenger's (ﷺ) house when he was with (my aunt) Maymūnah. After one third or one half of the night had passed, he got up. He went to a suspended waterskin and made *wuḍū'*; and I made *wuḍū'* with him. Then he stood to pray; and I stood on his left side. He moved me to his right side; then he put his hand on my head, as if to touch my ear to alert me. He prayed two short *rak'āt*, reading in each one *Umm ul-Qur'ān*[2]; then he made *taslīm*. Next, he prayed, completing eleven *rak'āt*, including *witr*. Then he slept until Bilāl came saying, 'The prayer, O Allāh's Messenger!' So he rose up, prayed two *rak'āt*, and (went out and) led the people (in *fajr*)[3]

3. 'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) reported:

> "When Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) got up at night, he would start his prayer with two short *rak'āt*. He would then pray eight *rak'āt*, then *witr*."

In another report, she said:

> "Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) used to pray *'ishā'*, followed by two short *rak'āt*. He would prepare his *siwāk* and

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1 Recorded by Mālik, Muslim, Abū 'Uwānah, Abū Dāwūd, and Ibn Naṣr.

2 This is one of the names of *al-Fātiḥah*.

3 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, and from him Abū 'Uwānah in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. The origin of this *ḥadīth* is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥs* (*al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*). Note that Ibn ul-Qayyim missed this report in *Zād ul-Ma'ād*, where he said, "Ibn 'Abbās did not mention that the Prophet (ﷺ) started with two short *rak'āt*, as 'Ā'ishah did, ..."

> water for *wuḍū'*. Whenever Allāh willed to wake him up, He did; so he would rise, clean his teeth with *siwāk*, make *wuḍū'*, pray two *rak'āt*, then stand praying eight *rak'āt* and reading equally in all of them; then he would pray *witr* on the ninth *rak'ah*. When Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) grew older, and increased in weight, he turned those eight to six *rak'āt*, prayed *witr* on the seventh, and then prayed two *rak'āt* while sitting, in which he read *al-Kāfirūn* (109) and *az-Zalzalah* (99)." [1]

Note that this last report from aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī clearly indicates that the total number of *rak'āt* (after *'ishā'*) is thirteen. If we interpret 'Ā'ishah's statement in the first narration, "Then *witr*," to mean three *rak'āt*, it agrees then with the second narration, as well as the previous *ḥadīth* of Ibn 'Abbās.

Note also that in the second report, 'Ā'ishah mentions the two short *rak'āt* after *'ishā'* without mentioning a *sunnah* of *'ishā'* prior to them. This confirms what was mentioned earlier (p. 52) that these two *rak'āt* could be the *sunnah* of *'ishā'*. They could also be two special *rak'āt* that prelude *qiyām* — and Allāh (ﷻ) knows best.

4. 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported:

> "The Prophet (ﷺ) would go to sleep; then, when he woke up, he would clean his teeth with *siwāk* and perform *wuḍū'*. He would then pray eight *rak'āt*, sitting and making *taslīm* at the end of each pair; then he would pray *witr* as five *rak'āt*, without sitting or making *taslīm* until the fifth. Then when the *athān* was called (for *fajr*), he would rise and pray two short *rak'āt*." [2]

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1 Both reports are recorded by aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī with an authentic *isnād*. The first half of the first report is also recorded by Muslim and Abū 'Uwānah. All of those have recorded it from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī with *'an'anah* (not declaring that he had heard it directly from the previous narrator). However, both an-Nasā'ī and Aḥmad recorded the second report from al-Ḥasan, where he declared the hearing.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad with an authentic *isnād* conforming with the condition of al-

This *hadīth* is clear in that the total number of *rakʿāt* is thirteen, in addition to the two *rakʿāt* of *fajr*. This may appear to conflict with a previously cited *hadīth* from ʿĀ'ishah's (p. 49) stating, "Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) did not pray more than eleven …" However, we have resolved this above by noting that in this statement, she does not include the two short *rakʿāt* with which he (ﷺ) started the *qiyām*.

5. ʿĀ'ishah reported:

> "From the time he finished praying *ʿishā'* until *fajr*, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) prayed eleven *rakʿāt*, making *taslīm* at the end of each pair, and praying *witr* as one *rakʿah*. He would remain in *sujūd*, before raising his head, for as long as one of you would read fifty *āyāt*. Then, after the caller finished the *athān* for *fajr*, and dawn became apparent for him (ﷺ), the caller would come (to alert him). So he would pray two short *rakʿāt*, then lie down on his right side until the caller came (to summon him) for *iqāmah* (call to start the prayer)." [1]

Note that this *hadīth* provides a clear evidence for lying down on the right side between the *sunnah* and *farḍ* of *fajr*. However, there are no reports of any of the *ṣaḥābah* doing that in the *masjid* — rather, some of them disliked doing it there, restricting it to the homes, as was the Prophet's (ﷺ) practice.

6. This method of praying *qiyām* is further confirmed by the *hadīth* reported by Ibn ʿUmar that a man asked Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) about

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Bukhārī and Muslim.

It is also recorded in an abbreviated form (without mentioning *taslīm* after every pair) by Muslim, Abū ʿUwānah, Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmithī, ad-Dārimī, Ibn Nasr, al-Bayhaqī, and Ibn Ḥazm (in *al-Muḥallā*).

Furthermore, ash-Shāfiʿī, at-Ṭayālisī, and al-Ḥākim, have all recorded only the part of this *hadīth* regarding praying *witr* as five *rakʿāt*.

1 Recorded by Muslim, Abū ʿUwānah, Abū Dāwūd, aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī, and Aḥmad. Muslim and Abū ʿUwānah also recorded it from Ibn ʿUmar; and Abū ʿUwānah recorded it from Ibn ʿAbbās.

the night prayer. He (ﷺ) replied:

«صلاة الليل مثنى مثنى، فإذا خشي أحدكم الصبح، صلى ركعة واحدة، توتر له ما قد صلى.»

‹The night prayer is one pair by one pair. And if one of you fears the arrival of morning, (let him pray) one *rakʿah* to make his prayer odd (*witr*).› [1]

Ibn ʿUmar (ﷺ) was then asked, "What does 'pair by pair' mean?" He replied, "Make *taslīm* at the end of every pair." [2]

Ibn ʿUmar (ﷺ) acted upon this understanding, as is reported that:

> "He would make *taslīm* before the last *rakʿah* of *witr*, which enabled him to ask for anything that he might need." [3]

7. The evidence for the fourth method is a previously cited *hadīth*, recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim from ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) (p. 49). The apparent understanding of that *hadīth* is that the Prophet (ﷺ) would sit for *tashahhud*, without making *taslīm*, after the first pair of those four and three *rakʿāt*. This is the interpretation of an-Nawawī, as was mentioned earlier (p. 50).

8. Saʿad Bin Hishām Bin ʿĀmir reported that he came to Ibn ʿAbbās and asked him about the way the Prophet (ﷺ) performed his *witr*. Ibn ʿAbbās replied, "Shouldn't I guide you to the most knowledgeable

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1 Recorded by Mālik, al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and Abū ʿUwānah.

2 Recorded by Muslim and Abū ʿUwānah. Note that this explanation by Ibn ʿUmar was recorded by Aḥmad as being said by the Prophet (ﷺ), and included in the text of the *hadīth*. But one of its narrators is ʿAbd ul-ʿAzīz Bin Abī Ruwād, who is generally truthful but sometimes makes mistakes, as is mentioned in *at-Taqrīb*. It is very possible that he mistakenly attributed this part to the Prophet (ﷺ) — Allāh (ﷻ) knows best.

3 Recorded by Mālik and al-Bukhārī.



person on earth about Allāh's Messenger's *witr*?" He said, "Who is it?" He said, "Ā'ishah; so go to her and ask her." So he went to her and said, "O Mother of the Believers! Tell me about the way Allāh's Messenger performed *witr*." She replied:

> "We used to prepare his *siwāk* and water; Allāh (ﷻ) would then wake him up whenever He wills during the night. He would brush his teeth with the *siwāk* and perform *wuḍū'*, then pray nine *rak'āt* without sitting until the eighth, where he would mention Allāh and praise Him, say *ṣalāh* upon His Prophet (ﷺ), and supplicate to Him. He would then stand without making *taslīm*, pray the ninth *rak'āh*, sit, mention Allāh and praise Him, say *ṣalāh* upon His Prophet (ﷺ), supplicate to Him, and make *taslīm* so loud as to make us hear it. Following that, he would pray two *rak'āt* while sitting. This, my son, made a total of eleven *rak'āh*.
>
> When Allāh's Prophet (ﷺ) grew older and carried more weight, he prayed *witr* as seven *rak'āt*, and then prayed those two *rak'āt* as he did before, making a total of nine — my son." [1]

An important observation from this *ḥadīth* is that the Prophet (ﷺ) used to invoke the *ṣalāh* upon himself, and that he said that in the first as well as the last *tashahhud*. The Muslims should therefore follow this *sunnah* instead of some *mathhabs* claiming that it is extremely disliked to say it in the first *tashahhud*. It is well established among the scholars that no distinction may be made in the way of performing *sunnah* and *farḍ* prayers — unless there is a specific evidence; and there is none in this case.

[1] Recorded by Muslim, Abū 'Uwānah, Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā'ī, Ibn Naṣr, al-Bayhaqī, and Aḥmad.

The Last Three Rak'āt

Differing from Maghrib

Nothing in the Prophet's (ﷺ) practice confirms praying five or three *rak'āt* with an intermediate sitting after every pair (as in (b) above). Yet, this can be derived from the above general texts. But this is not possible in the case of three *rak'āt*, because the Prophet (ﷺ) forbade making them resemble the *maghrib* prayer. Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لا توتر بثلاث تشبهوا بالمغرب.»

‹Do not pray *witr* as three *rak'āt* resembling the *maghrib* prayer.› [1]

There are two ways to pray the three *rak'āt* in a manner different from *maghrib*.

1. With *taslīm* between the *shaf'* (even ones) and *witr*. This manner is preferable because it is better founded in the *Sunnah*.

2. Without any sitting between the *shaf'* and the *witr*.

Ibn Naṣr's Understanding

The *ḥāfiẓ* Muḥammad Bin Naṣr al-Marwazī said:

> "What we prefer for one who prays *qiyām* during *Ramaḍān* and other times is to make *taslīm* after every pair of *rak'āt*. When he prays (the last) three *rak'āt*, let him read *al-A'lā* (87) in the first and *al-Kāfirūn* (109) in the second. Let him then make *tashahhud* and *taslīm*, then stand up and pray one *rak'ah* in which he reads *al-Fātiḥah*, *al-Ikhlāṣ* (112), and the two *mu'awwithāt* (113,114) ...

[1] Recorded by aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī, ad-Dāraquṭnī, and others, with an authen...

It is permissible to imitate the Prophet (ﷺ) in any of these manners (in which he prayed *qiyām*). However, the best choice is the one we just mentioned, because when he was asked about the manner of praying *qiyām*, the Prophet (ﷺ) replied, ‹**The night prayer is two** ***rakʿāt*** **by two** ***rakʿāt***.› So we choose what he chose for his *Ummah*, and at the same time permit imitating him in what he did, because no prohibition has been reported from him in this regard." [1]

And he said:

"Our opinion is that it is permissible to act according to these various reports. The reports varied because *qiyām*, both *witr* and other *rakʿāt*, is an optional prayer. The Prophet's (ﷺ) *qiyām* and *witr* varied as we described; sometimes he prayed one way, others another. These various ways are all permissible and good.

However, we could not find a confirmed report that the Prophet (ﷺ) performed *witr* as three joint *rakʿāt*, without *taslīm* except in the last one — as we found in the case of the five, seven, and nine *rakʿāt*. The reports of his performing *witr* as three *rakʿāt* make no mention of *taslīm*. For example, … that Ibn ʿAbbās (﵄) reported that, 'Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) used to perform *witr* as three *rakʿāt*, reciting in them *al-Aʿlā*, *al-Kāfirūn*, and *Qul huwallāhu aḥad*.'

Under the same subject, there are reports from ʿImrān Bin Ḥusayn, ʿĀ'ishah, ʿAbd ur-Raḥmān Bin Abzā, and Anas Bin Mālik. All of these reports are vague, making it possible that the Prophet (ﷺ) made *taslīm* on the second of the three *rakʿāt* of *witr* …" [2]

And he said:

1 *Qiyām ul-Layl* (p. 119).
2 *Qiyām ul-Layl* (p. 121).

"And our opinion is that one may pray *witr* as one, three, five, seven, or nine. All of this is good and permissible in accordance with the reports that we have included from the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions after him. But our choice is as we mentioned earlier.

Thus if one wanted to pray *witr* as one *rakʿah* without praying anything prior to it, we would recommend for him to precede it with two or more *rakʿāt*, and then pray a single *rakʿah* for *witr*. If he did not do that, and performed *witr* as only one *rakʿah*, this is permissible. We have reported that a number among the best of Muḥammad's (ﷺ) companions did that. Even though Mālik and other scholars disliked this, the Prophet's (ﷺ) companions are more worthy of being followed." [1]

Reconciling between Two Reports

Ibn Naṣr also said:

"Some reports that disapprove of praying *witr* as three *rakʿāt* have been attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ), his companions, and the *tābiʿīn* …" [2]

These reports are weak, except for the portion of Abū Hurayrah's *ḥadīth* that was cited earlier in this section. This might seem to conflict with Abū Ayyūb's report (p. 89). But they can be reconciled by saying that the prohibition (in Abū Hurayrah's *ḥadīth*) applies to praying *witr* with two *tashahhuds*, which would make it resemble the *maghrib* prayer. But if one does not sit, then they would not be similar. Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar mentioned this understanding in *Fatḥ ul-Barī*, which was approved by aṣ-Ṣanʿānī in *Subul us-Salām*.

The resemblance would be even less if one separates the two *rakʿāt* from the last *rakʿah* of *witr*. Imām Aḥmad was asked, "What is your position regarding witr, would you make *taslīm* after the two *rakʿāt*?"

1 Qiyām ul-Layl (p. 123).
2 Qiyām ul-Layl (p. 125).

He replied, "Yes." He was asked, "Why?" He replied, "Because the hadiths supporting that are stronger and more authentic." On another occasion, Ahmad (ﷺ) said:

> "One should make *taslīm* after the last two *rak'āt*. And if one does not make *taslīm*, I hope that it would still be acceptable. But *taslīm* is more confirmed from the Prophet (ﷺ)." [1]

Concluding *Qiyām*

Qunūt

The *qiyām* is concluded with a final *rak'ah*, in which one may say the *qunūt*, before or after *rukū'*. This is explained in the next chapter.

What to Say at the End of *Witr*

It is recommended in the *sunnah* to say at the end of *witr*, either before or after *taslīm*:

«اللهم إني أعوذُ برِضَاكَ مِن سَخَطِكَ، وبِمُعَافاتِكَ مِن عقوبَتِكَ، وأعوذُ بِكَ منكَ، لا أُحصي ثَناءً عليكَ. أنتَ كما أثنيتَ على نفسِكَ»

‹*Allāhumma innī a'ūthu biriḍāka min sakhaṭik, wa bi-mu'āfātika min 'uqūbatic, wa a'ūthu bika mink; lā uḥṣī thanā'an 'alayk, anta kamā athnayta 'alā nafsik* —
O Allāh! Indeed I seek refuge in Your pleasure from Your wrath, in Your protection from Your punishment, and I seek refuge in You from You. None can count Your praise, You are as only You

1 *Masā'il ul-Imām Ahmad* reported by his student Ibn Hānī.

praise Yourself.› [1]

When the Prophet (ﷺ) made *taslīm* at the end of *witr*, he would say:

«سُبحانَ المِلكِ القُدُّوس»

‹*Subḥāna 'l-malik il-quddūs* — **Exalted is the Holy Sovereign.›**

He would repeat this three times, extending his voice, and raising it on the third time. [2]

The Two Rak'āt Following *Witr*

One may pray two *rak'āt* after *witr*. We cited earlier 'Ā'ishah's (ﷺ) report (p. 106) that the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed them consistently. Furthermore, he recommended praying them to the travellers. Thawbān (ﷺ) reported that they (the *ṣaḥābah*) were travelling with Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), and he told them:

«إن هذا السفر جهدٌ وثقل، فإذا أوتر أحدكم فليركع ركعتين، فإن استيقظ وإلا كانتا له.»

‹Indeed, this travel constitutes struggle and hardship. So, after one of you prays *witr*, let him pray two *rak'āt*. If he later wakes up, (he may pray *qiyām*,) otherwise, they will be recorded for him (as *qiyām*).› [3]

These two *rak'āt* following *witr* seem to conflict with the

1 Recorded by Abū Dawūd, an-Nasā'ī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Irwā' ul-Ghalīl* no. 430).
2 Recorded by Abū Dawūd and an-Nasā'ī from Ubayy Bin Ka'b and Ibn Abzā (ﷺ). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāt* no. 1274,1275).
3 Recorded by Ibn Khuzaymah, ad-Dāraquṭnī and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*as-Saḥīḥah* no. 1993).

Prophet's (ﷺ) statement:

«اجعلوا آخر صلاتكم بالليل وتراً.»

‹Let your last prayer at night be *witr*.› [1]

The scholars have tried to reconcile in various ways between this *hadīth* and the above two reports. We find the best understanding in this regard is that of Ibn Naṣr who said that the command in the latter *hadīth* is, "A command of choice, not obligation."

The *sunnah* is to recite in these two *rakʿāt*: *sūrat uz-Zalzalah* (99), and *Sūrat ul-Kāfirūn* (109). [2]

Miscellaneous *Witr* Issues [3]

One *Witr* per Night

One may pray *witr* only once per night. This follows from many of the previous reports. In addition, Ṭalq Bin ʿAlī reported from his father that he heard Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) say:

«لا وتران في ليلة.»

‹One may not pray two *witrs* in one night.› [4]

Commenting on this *hadīth*, at-Tirmithī said:

> "The scholars among the Prophet's (ﷺ) companions and those who came after them have differed in regard to one who prays *witr* early in the night, then wakes up

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 Recorded by Ibn Khuzaymah with reports from ʿĀ'ishah and Anas whose chains strengthen each other. See *Sifat uṣ-Ṣalāh*.

3 See the footnote at the beginning of this chapter.

4 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmithī, and others; verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Sahīh ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 7567).

> later.
>
> Some of them took the position that he should revoke his earlier *witr* by adding one *rakʿah* to it, pray as much as he wishes, then end it with *witr*, because one may not pray two *witrs* in one night. This is the opinion of Abū Isḥāq.
>
> Others took the position that he may pray as much as he wishes, without revoking his *witr*. This is the opinion of Sufyān ath-Thawrī, Mālik Bin Anas, Aḥmad, and Ibn ul-Mubārak.
>
> The latter is the correct opinion, because it has been reported with various chains that the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed after *witr*." [1]

Missing *Witr*

There are various *hadīths* allowing one who misses *witr* to make it up in the morning. For example, Abū Saʿīd (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«من نام عن الوتر أو نسيه، فليصلِّ إذا ذكر، أو إذا استيقظ.»

‹If one misses *witr* because of sleep or forgetfulness, let him pray it when he remembers or wakes up.› [2]

And Zayd Bin Aslam reported from his father that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«من نام عن وتره فليصلِّ إذا أصبح.»

‹If one misses *witr* because of sleep, let him pray it in the morning.› [3]

1 *Sunan ut-Tirmithī*.

2 Recorded by Ibn Mājah, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Saḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 6562).

3 Recorded by at-Tirmithī who said, "This is more authentic ... meaning Abū Saʿīd's *hadīth* (*Saḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 65...

later.

Some of them took the position that he should revoke his earlier *witr* by adding one *rak'ah* to it, pray as much as he wishes, then end it with *witr*, because one may not pray two *witr*s in one night. This is the opinion of Abū Isḥāq.

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‹If one misses *witr* because of sleep, let him pray it in the morning.›[3]

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1 *Sunan ut-Tirmithī*.

2 Recorded by Ibn Mājah, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi'* no. 6562).

3 Recorded by at-Tirmithī who said, "This is more authentic than the previous one," meaning Abū Sa'īd's *ḥadīth* (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi'* no. 6563).

On the other hand, there are various *hadīths* declaring that *witr* may not be prayed in the morning. For example, Ibn ʿUmar (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إذا طلع الفجر فقد ذهب كل صلاة الليل والوتر فأوتروا قبل طلوع الفجر.»

‹When the dawn arrives, all night prayer and *witr* are gone. So pray *witr* before dawn.› [1]

The best reconciliation between these *hadīths* is to say that one who voluntarily misses *witr* may not make it up, contrary to him who intended to wake up but slept through the night.

Praying *Witr* on Animals

Saʿīd Bin Yasār (ﷺ) reported that he was travelling with Ibn ʿUmar. During the trip, he stayed behind for a short while, and then he rejoined him. Ibn ʿUmar asked him, "Where have you been?" He replied, "I stopped to pray *witr*." He then said:

> "Shouldn't you take a good example from Allāh's Messenger? I saw Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) pray *witr* on his animal." [2]

This indicates that a traveller may pray *witr* while sitting on a moving animal or, in our time, in automobiles, airplane, etc. In such cases, one should do his best to face the direction of the *Qiblah* at least at the beginning of the prayer.

1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Irwā' ul-Ghalīl* no. 422).
2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

CHAPTER 7

QUNŪT [1]

Meaning of Qunūt

Qunūt derives from the Arabic verb *qanata*. According to Ibn Manẓūr:

> "*Qunūt* means ceasing from speech, supplication during prayer, devotion, submission, performing pure acts of obedience, and standing. Thaʿlab claims that the latter is the original meaning. According to others, it means long standing …
>
> Abū ʿUbayd said, '*Qunūt* refers to many things, among which is standing. This is the meaning intended in *hadīths* regarding *qunūt* during the prayer, because the one who performs it supplicates while standing. More clear than that is Jābir's *hadīth* where he asked the Prophet (ﷺ) about the best form of prayer, and he replied, «طول القنوت.» **‹The one with long *qunūt*,›** meaning long standing.'
>
> The praying person is described as *qānit* (one who performs *qunūt*); and in the *hadīth*:
>
> «مثل المجاهد في سبيل الله كمثل الصائم القائم الدائم.»
>
> **‹The example of a *mujāhid* is like that of a person performing *qunūt* and fasting.›** [2]
>
> 'Performing *qunūt*' here means 'praying' …
>
> *Qunūt* has been mentioned repeatedly in *hadīths*. It has various meanings, such as obedience, submission, prayer, supplication, worship, standing, long standing,

1 For the most part, this chapter is not from the two translated works of al-Albānī.
2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others from Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ).

and ceasing from speech. It is then related to any particular one of these meanings in accordance with the context of the *ḥadīth* in which it appears.

Ibn ul-Anbārī said, '*Qunūt* is four types: prayer, long standing, consistency in obedience, and silence.' And Ibn Sayyidih said, '*Qunūt* means obedience. This is the original meaning, and in according with it Allāh says, ﴿وَالْقَانِتِينَ وَالْقَانِتَاتِ﴾ الأحزاب ٣٥ **«Those who are obedient to Allāh — males and females.»** [1] From this, standing in the prayer was called *qunūt*, as well as the *qunūt* in the *witr* prayer.'

Qanata for Allāh means obeyed Him ... *Qānit* means obedient; and it means one who continuously remembers Allāh; and some say that it means 'worshipper' ... It is famous in the language that *qunūt* means supplication.

The correct meaning for *qānit* is one who stands (i.e., abides) by Allāh's commands. When one supplicates while standing, he is specifically described as being *qānit* because he mentions Allāh (ﷻ) while standing on his feet.

Therefore, the correct meaning of *qunūt* is worship and supplication to Allāh (ﷻ) in the standing posture. It could also apply to other acts of obedience because, even if they did not involve actual standing on the feet, they still involve (spiritual) standing by intention." [2]

The meaning of *qunūt* that especially interests us in this chapter is: "making supplication during the prayer while in the standing posture".

Correct Reasons for *Qunūt*

True adherence to the *Sunnah* dictates following Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) in what he did, as well as staying away from what he

1 *Al-Aḥzāb* 33:35.

2 *Lisān ul-ʿArab.*

avoided. This is a general rule that applies to *qunūt* as well. Thus, it is not left open for the people to decide when and in which prayers they can perform *qunūt*. This is already regulated by the *Sunnah*, and recorded in the books of *Ḥadīth* — from the actions of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions. In this section, we present the correct situations in which one may perform this *duʿā'*.

1. Occurrence of Disasters

It is ordained in the *Sunnah* to perform *qunūt* when a great hardship or disaster befalls the Muslims, such as wars, earthquakes, floods, famines, etc. The evidence for this is the *ḥadīth* of Anas (ﷺ):

> "The Prophet (ﷺ) sent seventy men, who used to be know as *al-Qurrā'* (the reciters), on a mission. Two branches from the tribe of Sulaym, called Riʿl and Thakwān, stopped them by the Well of Maʿūnah. They told them, 'By Allāh, we are not out to fight with you; we are only on a mission of the Prophet (ﷺ). Yet, they killed them. And the Prophet (ﷺ) made *duʿā'* for a full month during the morning prayer. This is how *qunūt* started, because we did not do it prior to that." [1]

The mission of those reciters was explained in another narration by Anas (ﷺ):

> "Some people came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and requested him to send men to them who could teach them *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*. He sent to them seventy men from the *Anṣār* known as 'the reciters'. Among them was my maternal uncle Ḥarām. Those men used to recite *Qur'ān*, study, and learn during the night. During the day, they would bring water to the *Masjid*, gather firewood, sell it, and buy with that food for themselves and the poor people of the *Masjid*. So the Prophet (ﷺ) sent these men to them, but they attacked them and

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

killed them before they reached their destination …" [1]

Killing those righteous *ṣaḥābah* made the Prophet (ﷺ) very sad, as Anas reported:

> "The Prophet (ﷺ) performed *qunūt* for one month, when the reciters were killed; and I never saw Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) more sad." [2]

An-Nawawī said:

> "The correct and well-known practice is that when a disaster occurs, such as enemies, famine, plague, drought, obvious affliction for the Muslims, and so on, they perform *qunūt* in all of the (*farḍ*) prayers." [3]

2. Important Events that Affect the Muslims

Qunūt is also ordained in extremely urgent situations where the Muslims are in dire need for Allāh (ﷻ)'s help and protection in a specific matter. Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) and Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) made *qunūt* for one month, after *rukū*ʿ, saying:

«اللهم أنج الوليد بن الوليد، اللهم أنج سلمة بن هشام، اللهم أنج
عياش بن أبي ربيعة، اللهم أنج المستضعفين من المؤمنين، اللهم
اشدد وطأتك على مضر، اللهم اجعلها عليهم سنين كسني يوسف»

‹O Allāh! Save al-Walīd Bin al-Walīd.
O Allāh! Save ʿAyyāsh Bin Abī Rabīʿah.
O Allāh! Save the oppressed Believers.
O Allāh! Tighten your grip on (the tribe of) Muḍar.
O Allāh! Give them years of famine, like those of

1 Recorded by Muslim.
2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
3 *Sharḥu Ṣaḥīḥi Muslim.*

Yūsuf.› [1]

This *ḥadīth* was also recorded by Ibn Ḥibbān, who commented:

> "This report clearly indicates that *qunūt* during the prayers is only ordained for the occurrence of an important event, such as a victory by Allāh's enemies against the Muslims, the oppression of an oppressor, transgression against a person, people who need supplication, Muslims who are captivates in the hands of *mushriks*, or other similar situations." [2]

Abū Hurayrah also reported:

> "When the Prophet (ﷺ) wanted to make *duʿā* for someone, or curse someone, he would perform *qunūt* after *rukū*ʿ." [3]

And Abū Salamah reported that Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) said:

> "By Allāh, I will pray in front of you a prayer similar to the Prophet's (ﷺ)."

In his demonstration, Abū Hurayrah performed *qunūt* during *ẓuhr*, ʿ*ishā*, and *fajr* prayers, supplication for the believers, and cursing the disbelievers. [4]

3. Qiyām and Witr

This will be discussed in detail below.

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
2 *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān* no. 1986.
3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Aḥmad, and others.
4 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

Which Obligatory Prayers?

All Prayers

The first two types of *qunūt* in the previous section should be performed in the obligatory prayers. This is confirmed by some of the above reports, as well as the following report by Ibn ʿAbbās (ﷺ):

> "Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) performed *qunūt* consecutively for one full month, during *ẓuhr*, *ʿaṣr*, *maghrib*, *ʿishā*, and *fajr*. He did it at the end of the prayer, on the last *rakʿah*, after saying *samiʿallāhu liman ḥamidah*. He cursed branches from the tribe of Sulaym: Riʿl, Thakwān, and ʿUṣayyah; and those praying behind him said *āmīn*." [1]

A Deserted Sunnah

From other authentic reports, some of which were cited above, the Prophet (ﷺ) did not always perform *qunūt* in all of the daily prayers. Sometimes he performed it in *ẓuhr*, *ʿishā*, and *fajr*; sometimes in *maghrib* and *fajr* [2]; and sometimes in *fajr* alone. This seems to depend on the magnitude and urgency of the situation calling for this *qunūt*.

This *sunnah* has mostly disappeared from among the Muslims. Many of them never perform *qunūt* during the obligatory prayers, whether in disasters or otherwise. Others perform it consistently during the *fajr* prayer. Both of these approaches are wrong, as has been explained above, and will be discussed below for the *fajr* prayer.

At the present time, the Muslims are in continuous problems of wars, disasters, etc. But this does not warrant establishing *qunūt* on a regular basis, in all prayers.

Qunūt for exceptional events would only apply to situations where the disasters are sudden and unusual, causing saddness or anger in an exceptional manner. Under such circumstances, it is recommended to

1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, Aḥmad, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāt* no. 1290).

2 Recorded by Muslim and others from al-Barāʾ (ﷺ).

perform *qunūt* in all or some of the daily prayers — depending on the severity of the situation.

When the circumstances change, or becomes a usual matter, the Muslims should gradually or totally cease to perform *qunūt* in the obligatory prayers.

During the Fajr Prayer?

The Prophet (ﷺ) did not making *qunūt* regularly during *fajr* or other obligatory prayers. The above reports clearly indicate that he did it for one or more one-month periods. Other reports indicate that he cursed the disbelievers in *qunūt* after the battle of Uḥud, or on other occasions, until Allāh commanded him to stop (*Āl-ʿImrān* 3:128). [1]

Thus, it is not recommended to perform *qunūt* specifically in *fajr*, nor regularly and consistently in any of the other obligatory prayers. Ibn ul-Qayyim said:

> "It is quite obvious that, had Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) been consistent in performing *qunūt* every morning, with the *ṣaḥābah* saying *āmīn* behind him, this would have been transmitted by the whole *Ummah* — as they transmitted the information about reciting *Qurʾān* loud during it, the number of its *rakʿāt*, and its time. If they were to neglect reporting the *qunūt*, they could have neglected some of the other information as well ...
>
> His (ﷺ) practice was to perform *qunūt* specifically at the occurrence of unusual events, and to drop it otherwise." [2]

In fact, there are clear authentic reports from the *ṣaḥābah* (including Ibn ʿUmar, Ibn Masʿūd, Ibn ʿAbbās, Anas, and Abū Hurayrah) expressing that they did not perform *qunūt* during *fajr*, and others in which they declare it to be a *bidʿah*. For example, Abū Mālik al-Ashjaʿī (ﷺ) reported that he asked his father:

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim from Abū Hurayrah and Ibn ʿU...

2 *Zād ul-Maʿād* 1:272.

"O father! You have prayed behind Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, and 'Alī. Did they perform *qunūt*?"

And his father replied, "My son, it is an innovation!" [1]

As for the report that, "Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) continued to perform *qunūt* during the *fajr* prayer until he departed from the world," [2] it is weak, and may not be used to refute the above authentic reports.

Before or After *Rukū'*?

If one wishes to perform *qunūt*, he should do it in the last *rak'ah* of the prayer, before or after *rukū'*. Both options are permissible according to most scholars.

After *Rukū'*

For the *qunūt* of the obligatory prayers, most reports support performing it after *rukū'*. Some of these reports have preceded. In addition, Ibn Sīrīn reported that Anas Bin Mālik was asked, "Did the Prophet (ﷺ) perform *qunūt* in *fajr*?" He replied, "Yes." He was asked, "Was it before or after *rukū'*?" He replied, "After *rukū'*, for a short while." [3]

Before *Rukū'*

'Āsim Bin al-Aḥwal reported that he asked Anas (ﷺ) whether *qunūt* should be performed before or after *rukū'*. Anas replied, "Before it."

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, an-Nasā'ī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāt* no. 1292).

2 Recorded from Anas by Aḥmad, ad-Dāraquṭnī, and others. This report is weak because of one of the narrators in its chain, Abū Ja'far ar-Rāzī, who is considered weak by the scholars of *Ḥadīth*.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

... said, "But such and such person told me that you said, 'After it.'" ... replied, "He is wrong. The Prophet (ﷺ) performed *qunūt* after ... for one month only ..." [1]

In another report, Anas (ﷺ) said:

"*Qunūt* may be performed before or after *rukū'*." [2]

Al-Albānī reconciles between the various reports by saying that those reports that mention *qunūt* after *rukū'* refer to the *qunūt* of events and disasters (which is done in the obligatory prayers), whereas the reports that mention *qunūt* before *rukū'* refer to the other case, namely, the *qunūt* in *witr*. [3]

However, there are authentic reports recorded by Ibn Abī Shaybah [4] and at-Taḥāwī [5] from 'Umar, Ibn 'Abbās, and others, that they performed *qunūt* in *fajr* before *rukū'*. [6]

Qunūt in *Witr*

Ubayy Bin Ka'b (ﷺ) reported that:

"Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) used to perform *qunūt* in *witr* before *rukū'*." [7]

Ibn ul-Qayyim said:

"Nothing is recorded from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he performed *qunūt* in *witr* except this *ḥadīth* (of Ubayy)."

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim. The rest of this *ḥadīth* has been cited earlier in this chapter.

2 Recorded by Ibn Mājah. Al-Ḥāfiẓ said in *Fatḥ ul-Bārī* that its *isnād* is strong. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāt* no. 1294).

3 *Irwā' ul-Ghalīl* 2:168.

4 *Al-Muṣannaf*, starting from no. 7012.

5 *Al-Mushkal* 1:147.

6 See 'Ar'ūr's *Aḥkām ul-Qunūt* p. 45.

7 Recorded by an-Nasā'ī, Ibn Mājah, and others. It is verified to be authe... Albānī in *Irwā' ul-Ghalīl* no. 426.



In addition, there are reports from the *ṣaḥābah* concerning this. ʿAlqamah reported, "Ibn Masʿūd and other companions used to perform *qunūt* in *witr* before *rukūʿ*." [1]

Conclusion

From the above, we conclude that *qunūt* may be performed before or after *rukūʿ*. However, it is preferable to perform it after *rukūʿ* for the obligatory prayers and before it for *witr*.

Miscellaneous Issues

Saying *Qunūt* Loudly

It is clear from the previous reports that the *Sunnah* is to say the *qunūt* supplication aloud. This enables the believers to hear the *imām*'s supplication and share it with him. Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar said:

> "It appears to me that the wisdom behind making *qunūt* (of disasters) in the standing posture instead of *sujūd*, even though supplications are more likely to be answered in *sujūd*, is that it requires participation from those praying behind the *imām*, at least by saying *āmīn*. Because of this, the scholars agree that it should be said aloud." [2]

Saying *Āmīn*

It is recommended for those praying behind the *imām* to say *āmīn* during the *qunūt* supplication. In this regard, we have cited earlier Ibn ʿAbbās's *ḥadīth* (p. 120).

1 Recorded by Ibn Abī Shaybah (no. 6911) with an authentic *isnād*. See *Aḥkām ul-Qunūt*.

2 *Fatḥ ul-Bārī* 2:570.

Raising the Hands

In one of the reports of Anas's narration, he said:

> "... I never saw Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) as sorrowful. So during the morning prayer, he raised his hands and cursed them ..." [1]

Al-Bayhaqī mentioned various reports, some of which are authentic, about the companions' raising their hands. An-Nawawī confirmed the authenticity of other reports from the companions mentioned by al-Bukhārī.

This applies to the *qunūt* of *witr* as well. It is confirmed that ʿUmar (ﷺ) raised his hands in this *qunūt*. [2]

Also, it is recommended for those praying behind the *imām* to raise their hands when he does so during *qunūt*, because of the Prophet's (ﷺ) general instruction:

«إنما جعل الإمام ليؤتمّ به.»

‹An *imām* has been appointed to be followed.› [3]

What to Say During the *Qunūt* of *Witr*

After finishing *Qur'ān*ic recitation in the last *rakʿah* of *witr*, and before *rukūʿ*, one should sometimes supplicate with what the Prophet (ﷺ) taught to his grandson al-Ḥasan Bin ʿAlī (ﷺ):

«اللهمَّ اَهْدِني فيمن هَدَيْتَ، وعافِني فيمن عافيتَ،
وتولَّني فيمن توليتَ، وبارِكْ لي فيما أعطيتَ، وقِني شرَّ

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, al-Bayhaqī, and others, with an authentic *isnād*. See *Aḥkām ul-Qunūt*.

2 Mentioned by al-Albānī in *Irwā'ul-Ghalīl* (2:181).

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī.

ما قَضيتَ، فإنَّك تَقضي ولا يُقضى عليك، وإنه لا يَذِلُّ مَن واليتَ، ولا يَعِزُّ مَنْ عادَيْتَ، تباركتَ ربَّنا وتعالَيْتَ، لا مَنْجا مِنكَ إلاّ إليك»

‹Allāhumma 'hdinī fīman hadayt; wa-'āfinī fīman 'āfayt; wa-tawallanī fīman tawallayt; wabāriklī fīmā a'ṭayt; wa-qinī sharra mā qaḍayt; fa-innaka taqḍī walā yuqḍā 'alayk; wa-innahū lā yaḍillu man wālayt; walā ya'izzu man 'ādayt; tabārakta rabbanā wa-ta'ālayt; lā manjā minka illā ilayk —
O Allāh! Guide me with those whom You have guided; protect me with those whom You have protected; befriend me with those whom You have befriended; bless for me what You have bestowed (on me); shelter me from the evil of what You have decreed. Indeed, You decree, and none can dominate You; he whom You befriend will never be humiliated, nor will Your enemy ever be honored. Blessed are You, Our Lord, and exalted; there is no refuge from You except toward You.› [1]

One may occasionally add to this the *ṣalāh* (prayer) upon the Prophet (ﷺ). Also, during the second half of *Ramaḍān*, one may further curse the disbelievers, say the *ṣalāh* upon the Prophet (ﷺ), and supplicate for the Muslims. This was practiced by the *imāms* during the time of 'Umar (ﷺ), as 'Abd ur-Raḥmān Bin 'Abd al-Qārī reported:

> "And they cursed the *kuffār* in the (second) half (of *Ramaḍān*):

«اللهم قاتِلِ الكَفَرَةَ الَّذينَ يَصُدُّونَ عن سبيلِكَ، ويُكَذِّبونَ رُسُلَكَ، ولا يُؤْمِنون بوعدِكَ، وخالِفْ بينَ كَلِمَتِهِمْ، وألْقِ في

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā'ī, and others. It is verified to be authentic by al-Albānī in *Ṣifat uṣ-Ṣalāh*.

قُلوبهمُ الرُّعْبَ، وألْقِ عليهم رِجزَكَ وعذابَكَ، إلهَ الحقِّ»

'Allāhumma qātil 'lkafarata 'llathīna yaṣuddūna 'an sabīlik, wayukath-thibūna rusulak, walā yu'minūna biwa'dik, wakhālif bayna kalimatahum, wa-'alqi 'alayhim rijzaka wa-'athābak, ilāha 'lḥaqq —
O Allāh, fight the disbelievers who obstruct the people from Your way, reject Your messengers, and do not believe in Your promises. Cause them to be divided, cast terror into their hearts, and launch Your punishment and chastisement upon them. You are the God of Truth.'

Then they said the *ṣalāh* upon the Prophet (ﷺ), prayed for the *Muslims* with what they wished of good, and sought forgiveness for the believers. Following this, they said:

«اللَّهمَّ إيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ، ولكَ نُصَلِّي ونَسْجُدُ، وإليكَ نسعى ونَحْفِدُ، ونرجو رَحْمَتَكَ ربَّنا، ونخافُ عذابَكَ الجِدَّ، إنَّ عذابَكَ لِمَن عادَيْتَ مُلْحَقٌ»

'Allāhumma iyyaka na'bud, walaka nuṣallī wanasjud, wa-ilayka nas'ā wanaḥfid, wanarjū raḥmataka rabbanā, wanakhāfu 'athābka 'ljadd, inna 'athābaka liman 'ādayta mulḥaq —
O Allāh, it is You that we worship, to You we pray and prostrate ourselves, and unto You we run and rush. We hope in Your Mercy our Lord, and we fear Your severe chastisement - surely, Your severe chastisement is to reach those whom You hate.'

Then they said *takbīr* and went to *sujūd*." [1]

1 Recorded by Ibn Khuzaymah. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (… *Ramaḍān* p. 32).

Innovations and Deviations

Wiping the Face

There are no authentic reports confirming that the Prophet (ﷺ) ever wiped his face with his hands after supplicating in general, or after *qunūt* in particular. Because of this, an-Nawawī said:

> "This is not recommended, in accordance with what al-'Izz Bin 'Abd us-Salām said ... No one does this but an ignorant person." [1]

And al-Bayhaqī said:

> "As for wiping the face with the hands after concluding the supplication, I do not know that any of the *salaf* did it." [2]

Preceding Qunūt with Takbīr

There are no authentic reports supporting raising the hands with *takbīr* before starting *qunūt*. Thus, doing it is an innovation that must be avoided.

Extended Qunūt

An innovated practice that started in the holiest *masjids* of *Islām*, and spread throughout the Muslim world, is that of making very extended *qunūt*, especially after the middle of *Ramaḍān*.

You find the *imāms* recite long supplications, repeating some meanings once and again, tiring their hands and the hands of their followers, allowing the thoughts of the followers to roam in a confused and impatient manner — waiting for the *imām* to end his stream of unrelated ideas and requests!

This innovation does not have a basis in the practice of the

1 *Al-Majmū'*.

2 *As-Sunan* 1:212.

Prophet (ﷺ) or his companions, whose *qunūt* was concise and to the point, as presented in the previous section.

Moaning and Weeping

Added to the innovation of extended *qunūt*, it has also become a common practice for the *imāms* to weep and sob in a seemingly devout manner, moving many of those praying behind them to follow them into a collectively wailing crowd. It seems as if this is a requirement of leading *tarāwīḥ* — to the extent that the *imāms* compete in crying; and the common people think that the best *imām* is the one who cries the most and causes the largest number of people to cry with him!

This is another innovation that has no foundation in the *Sunnah* or the practice of the most pious generation who ever lived.

There is nothing wrong in crying out of fear of Allāh. But the *Sunnah* gives the highest merit to those who do it when they are alone, away from the scrutiny of others. One's fear of Allāh and realization of his shortcomings could very well lead him to cry deeply, even in front of other people. But this should be the exception, not the norm.

Ibn Bāz (رحمه الله) was asked in regard to the epidemic of weeping and loud crying during *tarāwīḥ*. He replied:

> "I have advised many of those who contacted me to beware of this. They should avoid it because it harms the praying people and disturbs them as well as the *imām*. A believer should strive not to make his voice audible when he cries. He should beware of Satan who may drag him into showoff ... But if crying overwhelms him without intending that, then there is no blame upon him." [1]

Holding the Muṣḥaf

As much as possible, the *imām* should avoid holding a *muṣḥaf* (*Qur'ān*-book) during the prayer. He should read from his memory, because this was the predominant practice of the *salaf*. The desire to

1 *Al-Jawāb uṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ* p. 19-20.

complete the *Qur'ān* during *Ramaḍān* should not lead to violations of the *Sunnah*. The *imām* should not recur to reading from the *muṣḥaf* during the prayer unless his memorization is very limited.

As for the people praying behind the *imām*, they should not hold the *muṣḥaf*, because that was not the practice of the *salaf* either. Only if the *imām*'s memorization is weak, requiring frequent prompting, may one of the men behind him help by holding a *muṣḥaf*.

Ibn Bāz (ﷺ) was asked in regard to holding the *muṣḥaf* during *tarāwīḥ* by the *imām* or the people behind him. He replied:

> "There is a difference in this regard among the scholars. Most probably, it is permissible for the *imām* to read from the *muṣḥaf* if he does not memorize much ... This is confirmed by the report from ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ). But if an *imām* with good memorization is available, that is better, because it helps the concentration and reduces impermissible actions — since holding a *muṣḥaf* necessitates putting it down, taking it up, and searching through the pages. Thus, this should not be done unless necessary, and it is better to do without it.
>
> As for holding the *muṣḥaf* by the people behind the *imām*, I know of no basis for this. The proper thing for a person is to have serenity and devotion. He should not hold a *muṣḥaf*, but should place his right hand over the left one and place both over his chest. Holding a *muṣḥaf* will divert him from applying these *sunnah*s and would probably involve his heart and eyes in reviewing the pages and *āyāt* instead of listening to the *imām*. My opinion is that one should avoid this and listen carefully. If he has knowledge, he may prompt the *imām*; otherwise, other people may do that. And even if the *imām* made a mistake and no one corrected him, that does not affect the prayer — except for *al-Fātiḥah* ... If one person only holds a *muṣḥaf* and prompts the *imām* if needed, that may be permissible." [1]

1 *Al-Jawāb uṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ* p. 17-19.

CHAPTER 8

IʿTIKĀF [1]

Definition

In the Arabic language, the abstract noun *iʿtikāf* means confinement. It derives from the verb *ʿakafa*, which means to dwell in a particular place. From this also derives the word *maʿkūf* meaning imprisoned. [2]

In the *Islām*ic *sharʿ*, *iʿtikāf* means to dwell or retreat in a *masjid* for a specific period of time, seeking by that Allāh's pleasure [3]. The person who performs *iʿtikāf* is called *muʿtakif* or *ʿākif*.

Ruling

Iʿtikāf is a recommended act of worship during *Ramaḍān*, as well as other times of the year. This is confirmed by the *Qur'ān*, the *Sunnah*, the practice of the *salaf*, and *ijmāʿ*. In the *Qur'ān*, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَلَا تُبَٰشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنتُمْ عَٰكِفُونَ فِي ٱلْمَسَٰجِدِ﴾ البقرة ١٨٧

> **«And have no contact (intercourse) with them (your wives) while you are performing *iʿtikāf* in the *masjids*.»** [4]

In the *Sunnah*, a number of authentic *ḥadīth*s describe the *iʿtikāf* of the Prophet (ﷺ), some of which will be cited below. There are also

1 For the most part, this chapter is not from the work translated from al-Albānī, but was included here for the sake of completeness. The references used for this material are mentioned in the Preface.

2 From *Ḥulyat ul-Fuqahā* by Ibn Fāris (110), *Jāmiʿ ul-Uṣūl* (1:337), and *al-Miṣbāḥ ul-Munīr* (2:424).

3 From *Ṭarḥ ut-Tathrīb* by Ibn ul-ʿIrāqi (4:166) and *al-Mufradāt* by ar-Rāghib (343).

4 Al-Baqarah 2:187.

numerous reports describing the *i'tikāf* of the *salaf* [1]. For example, 'Umar (ﷺ) said to the Prophet (ﷺ), "I made a vow during *Jāhiliyyah* to perform *i'tikāf* for one day in *al-Masjid ul-Ḥarām* (the Sacred Mosque of Makkah)." The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«فأوفِ بنذرك.»

‹Fulfill your vow then.›

Thus 'Umar performed *i'tikāf* for one day. [2]

As for *ijmā'*, it was declare by Ibn ul-Munthir [3], and approved by Ibn Qudāmah [4].

Weak Reports

Some unauthentic reports are usually cited to further encourage people to perform *i'tikāf*. We mention them here in order to warn against using them.

1. From al-Ḥusayn Bin 'Alī (ﷺ) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Whoever performs *i'tikāf* for ten days of *Ramaḍān*, it counts for him as having performed *hajj* and *'umrah* [5] twice." This *ḥadīth* is fabricated. [6]

2. From 'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Whoever performs *i'tikāf* with belief, and looking forward to Allāh's reward, all his

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1 Many of these reports are recorded by Ibn Abī Shaybah and 'Abd ur-Razzāq in their *Musannafs*.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and Ibn Khuzaymah. Some of the reports have mentioned "night" instead of "day". Together, the various reports mean a full day and night, which is the minimum duration of *i'tikāf* as is established below.

3 In *al-Ijmā'* (47).

4 In *al-Mughnī* (3:183).

5 Partial pilgrimage performed during *hajj* and at other times of the year.

6 Recorded by al-Bayhaqī in *Shu'ab ul-Īmān*. Review *aḍ-Ḍa'īfah* (no. 518) and *Ḍa'īf ul-Jāmi'* (5451) by al-Albānī.

previous sins will be forgiven." This *ḥadīth* is weak. [1]

3. "Whoever performs *i'tikāf* for one day, seeking Allāh's Face, Allāh will make three trenches between him and the fire, each trench wider than the distance from east to west." This *ḥadīth* is weak. [2]

Wisdom and Manners of *I'tikāf*

Wisdom

I'tikāf is an opportunity for a Muslim to turn to Allāh (ﷻ), in one of His houses of worship, with submission and devotion, unobstructed or distracted by the worldly concerns. Ibn ul-Qayyim (ﷺ) said:

> "The righteousness and steadiness of the heart in its journey toward Allāh (ﷻ) depends on its devotion to Him; its confusion is expelled by turning fully toward Him ...
>
> Because of this, Allāh (ﷻ) has ordained *i'tikāf*. Its purpose and spirit is for the heart to turn fully and solely toward Allāh (ﷻ), living in privacy with Him, ceasing to be involved with the created things, and getting involved with Him alone instead. With this, His remembrance, love, and devotion replace the worries and thoughts of the heart, overtaking their place in it, and becoming its only concern. Then the thoughts become busy with remembering Him and contemplating on that which pleases Him and brings one closer to Him. One's pleasure is then attained by His company rather than that of the creatures, thereby preparing himself for the day of solitude in the graves, when he will have no company or delight except Him. This is

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2 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī and others. It has an obscure problem, which is in *aḍ-Ḍa'īfah* (no. 5347) by al-Albānī.

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the greatest purpose of *i'tikāf*."[1]

And Ibn Rajab (ﷺ) said:

> "The meaning and reality of *i'tikāf* is that one severs all ties with the created things in order to be dedicated to serving the Creator. As one's knowledge about Allāh, love for Him, and pleasure in His company increase, he gains full and complete devotion to Allāh (ﷻ) in all situations."[2]

Manners during I'tikāf

A *mu'takif* should not forget the great wisdom and purpose of *i'tikāf* outlined above. He should pass the days of *i'tikāf* in tranquility and devotion, dedicating his time to Allāh (ﷻ), and spending it in performing acts of pure worship, such as prayer, reading *Qur'ān*, making *thikr*, seeking *Islām*ic knowledge in areas of *tafsīr*, *Ḥadīth*, etc. He should speak in a low voice, avoid quarrelling, and abstain from futile talks and arguments.

Thus, the person performing *i'tikāf* should strive to benefit from his dwelling in the *masjid* to excel in worship and devotion, without involving himself in any of the worldly distractions.

Time of Year

I'tikāf may be performed at any time of the year. 'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) performed *i'tikāf* for ten days in *Shawwāl*.[3]

However, it is most recommended to perform *i'tikāf* during *Ramadān*. This follows from the *hadīth* of Abū Hurayrah:

> "Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) used to perform *i'tikāf* for ten

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1 *Zād ul-Ma'ād* (2:86-87).

2 *Laṭā'if ul-Ma'ārif* (p. 203).

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and Ibn Khuzaymah.

> days during each *Ramaḍān*. On the year in which he passed, he performed *i'tikāf* for twenty days."[1]

The best days to perform *i'tikāf* are the last ten days of *Ramaḍān*, because these are the days on which *Laylat ul-Qadr* falls. 'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) reported:

> "The Prophet (ﷺ) used to perform *i'tikāf* during the last ten days of *Ramaḍān* until Allāh (ﷻ) took his life."[2]

Place for I'tikāf

A Mosque of Jumu'ah

I'tikāf may only be performed in a *masjid*, as is indicated in the above *āyah* from *al-Baqarah* (2:187). Also, 'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) said:

> "It is recommended for a person who is performing *i'tikāf* not to leave (the *masjid*) except for an essential need, not to visit a sick person, and not to touch or sleep with his wife. *I'tikāf* may only be performed in a *masjid* where the *jamā'ah* (or *Jumu'ah*) prayers are established. And it is recommended for the one performing *i'tikāf* to fast."[3]

Thus, *i'tikāf* must be performed in a *masjid* where the *Jumu'ah* is held. This insures that one would not need to exit from it to attend the *Jumu'ah* prayer, which is an obligation on him.

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1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Ibn Khuzaymah.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and Ibn Khuzaymah.

3 Recorded by al-Bayhaqī with an authentic chain of narrators, and Abū Dāwūd with a good chain. The part between brackets is from the latter.

THE THREE SACRED MOSQUES

A clear authentic *hadīth* further restricts the *masjids* in the above *āyah* (2:187) to only three: *al-Masjid ul-Harām* (the Sacred Mosque of Makkah), *al-Masjid un-Nabawī* (the Prophet's Mosque at al-Madīnah), and *al-Masjid ul-Aqsā* (the Furthest Mosque at Jerusalem).

A group of people performed *i'tikāf* in a *masjid* between the houses of 'Abdullāh Bin Mas'ūd and Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī in al-Kūfah. So, Huthayfah (ﷺ) asked Ibn Mas'ūd (ﷺ):

> "Do you hold the opinion that it is permissible to perform *i'tikāf* (at the *masjid*) between your house and Abū Mūsā's? You know that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:
>
> «لا إعتكاف إلاّ في المساجد الثلاثة.»
>
> **«*I'tikāf* should not to be performed except in the Three *Masjids*.»"**

Ibn Mas'ūd replied:

> "You may have forgotten (the meaning), and they (who are performing *i'tikāf* at the other *masjid*) remembered. Or you may be mistaken, and they be right!" [1]

Ibn Mas'ūd's response indicates that he does not deny the authenticity of this *hadīth*, but is only uncertain as to its correct interpretation. The best in this case is to adhere to the apparent meaning of this *hadīth*.

A number of scholars among the *salaf* have adhered to the text of this *hadīth*, among them are Huthayfah Bin al-Yamān (ﷺ), Sa'īd Bin al-Musayyib, and 'Atā' (although 'Atā' did not mention *al-Aqsā*). Others among the *salaf* hold the opinion that *i'tikāf* may be performed

1 Recorded by at-Tahāwī in *Mushkal ul-Āthār* (4:20), ath-Thahabī in *Siyaru A'lām in-Nubalā* (15:81), al-Ismā'īlī, and al-Bayhaqī in *as-Sunan* (4:316), with an authentic chain from Huthayfah Bin al-Yamān (ﷺ); it is proven authentic by ath-Thahabī and al-Albānī in *Silsilat ul-Ahādīth is-Sahīhah* (No. 2786).

in any masjid of *Jumu'ah*.

AT HOME?

Some scholars say that one may even perform *i'tikāf* at the part of one's home which is designated as prayer-place.

It is obvious that one should follow the opinion that agrees best with the authentic *hadīth*. And Allāh (ﷻ) knows best.

Requirements of I'tikāf

STAYING WITHIN THE MASJID

As indicated above in the definition of *i'tikāf* as well as the *hadīth* of 'Ā'ishah (ﷺ), a *mu'takif* may not leave the boundaries of the *masjid*, except for a human need, such as eating or going to the toilet.

FASTING

It is commendable for the one performing *i'tikāf* to fast, as was stated earlier from 'Ā'ishah (ﷺ). Many scholars consider fasting a condition for *i'tikāf*, without which it is invalid. Ibn ul-Qayyim (ﷺ) said:

> "There is no report that the Prophet (ﷺ) performed *i'tikāf* without fasting; rather, 'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) said:
>
> '*I'tikāf* may not be performed without fasting.'
>
> Also, Allāh (ﷻ) only mentioned *i'tikāf* with fasting; and Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) did not perform *i'tikāf* except while fasting. So the soundest opinion, which is held by the majority of the *salaf*, is that: Fasting is a condition for *i'tikāf*. This is the opinion that *Shaykh ul-Islām* Abū al-'Abbās Ibn Taymiyyah favored." [1]

1 *Zād ul-Ma'ād*.

Starting and Ending Times

It is recommended to start *i'tikāf* in the morning, immediately after *fajr* prayer. 'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) reported:

> "When Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) intended *i'tikāf*, he would pray *fajr* then enter into his *i'tikāf* place." [1]

It is recommended to end *i'tikāf* in the morning as well. Al-Bukhārī headed one of the chapters in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* by the title, "Chapter concerning departing from *i'tikāf* in the morning." He then cited the *ḥadīth* of Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (ﷺ):

> "We performed *i'tikāf* with Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) over the middle ten days (of *Ramaḍān*). On the morning of the twentieth, we moved our belongings." [2]

Minimum Stay

From the above, it is clear that one should stay in *i'tikāf* for a minimum of one day and night. Thus, as declared by Ibn Taymiyyah [3], it is not permissible for one entering a *masjid* just for a prayer to intend performing *i'tikāf* during the time of his stay in it.

Permitted Acts During *I'tikāf*

Leaving the Masjid for a Need

It is permissible for the one performing *i'tikāf* to leave the *masjid* to fulfill a need, like going to the toilet or taking a required bath. One may also bring his head or a part of his body out of the *masjid*'s boundaries without invalidating his *i'tikāf*. 'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) said:

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
3 In *al-Ikhtiyārāt*.

> "While Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) was in the *Masjid* performing *i'tikāf*, he would bring his head (out of the *Masjid*) into my apartment (next to the *Masjid*), so that I would comb [and wash] his hair. Between us was only the threshold of the door, and I was menstruating. During his *i'tikāf*, he would not enter the house (completely) except for a human need." [1]

Performing Wuḍū Within the Masjid

It is permissible for one in *i'tikāf* to perform *wuḍū'* in the *masjid* [2]. A man who served the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "The Prophet (ﷺ) performed a light ablution in the *Masjid*." [3]

Erecting a Tent Inside the Masjid

It is permissible for one in *i'tikāf* to pitch a small tent in the rear of the *masjid* to retire to and perform his worship in seclusion [4]. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) requested 'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) to erect a skin tent for him while he was in *i'tikāf* [5]. He (ﷺ) also performed *i'tikāf* under a small canopy with a straw mat covering its door. [6]

Using a Mattress

A *mu'takif* may lay down a mattress or mat in a corner of the *masjid*

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Ibn Abū Shaybah, and Aḥmad.
2 Note that this is not possible in most of the contemporary *masjids*, because they are tiles or carpeted, contrary to the Prophet's (ﷺ) *Masjid* whose floor was stone and earth.
3 Recorded by al-Bayhaqī with a good *isnād*, and by Aḥmad with an authentic *isnād*.
4 As in the above note, this is also not possible in most of today's *masjids*, because of the way they are structured. However, one may reserve for himself a specific corner of the mosque where he spends most of his time during *i'tikāf*.
5 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
6 Recorded by Muslim and Ibn Khuzaymah.

for his sleep. Ibn 'Umar (ﷺ) reported that when Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) performed *i'tikāf*, a mattress or bed would be laid down for him behind the pillar of at-Tawbah. [1]

Disapproved Acts During I'tikāf

Leaving Without Need

As indicated above, leaving the *masjid* without need contradicts the basic definition of *i'tikāf*, and the way the Prophet (ﷺ) performed it. It therefore invalidates it; Ibn Ḥazm said:

> "The scholars agree that any *mu'takif* who departs from the *masjid* without a need, necessity, or obligatory act of righteousness, then his *i'tikāf* is invalidated." [2]

Intercourse

I'tikāf is nullified by intercourse, as Allāh (ﷻ) said:

﴿وَلَا تُبَـٰشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنتُمْ عَـٰكِفُونَ فِي ٱلْمَسَـٰجِدِ﴾ البقرة ١٨٧

> **«And have no contact with them while performing *i'tikāf* in the *masjids*.»** [3]

Ibn 'Abbās (ﷺ) said:

> "If a *mu'takif* performs intercourse, he invalidates his *i'tikāf*, and would have to start over." [4]

1 Recorded by Ibn Mājah and al-Bayhaqī. Its *isnād* is *ḥasan* (*Ṣifatu Ṣawm in-Nabī*).
2 *Marātib al-Ijmā'* (p.48).
3 Al-Baqarah 2:187.
4 Recorded by Ibn Abī Shaybah and 'Abd ur-Razzāq with an authentic chain of narrators.

Yet there is no authentic text requiring a specific *kaffārah* (expiation) for the person who invalidates his *i'tikāf* like that.

Worldly Involvement

Getting involved in worldly matters contradicts the spirit and meaning of *i'tikāf*, where one is supposed to retreat in seclusion for the mere purpose of worshipping Allāh (ﷻ) without distractions.

A *mu'takif* who wastes his time in futile talks and arguments, revilement and cursing, or other similar acts, reduces and spoils the reward and value of his *i'tikāf*. Ibn ul-Qayyim says:

> "The goal of this (good conduct) is to fulfill the purpose and spirit of *i'tikāf*. This is contrary to the practice of those ignorant ones, who make their place of *i'tikāf* a meeting place for visiting, chatting, and gossip. This is indeed contrary to the Prophetic *i'tikāf*!" [1]

Women's I'tikāf

It is permissible for a woman to visit her husband while he is performing *i'tikāf*, and for him to walk with her to the *masjid*'s door. Ṣafiyyah (ﷺ) said:

> "The Prophet (ﷺ) was performing *i'tikāf* in the *Masjid* during the last ten days of *Ramaḍān*. I went to visit him one night. Some of his wives were with him, and left soon after. I talked with him for a while, then stood up to return home; he said, «لا تعجلي حتى أنصرف معك.» ‹**Wait, let me escort you.**› And he walked with me (toward my dwelling in the house of Usāmah Bin Zayd). When we reached the door of the *Masjid* closest to the door of Umm Salamah's house, two men from the *Anṣār* passed by; when they saw the Prophet (ﷺ) they hurried; and he (ﷺ) called out to them, «على رِسْلِكُمَا، إنها صفية بنت حيي.»

1 *Zād ul-Ma'ād*.

‹Slow down! This is my wife **Ṣafiyyah Bint Ḥuyayy.›**
They said, "*Subḥānallāh* (exalted is Allāh)! O Messenger of Allāh [1]!" So he (ﷺ) said:

«إن الشيطان يجري من الإنسان مجرى الدم، وإني خشيت أن يقذف في قلوبكما شراً».

‹Satan flows in the human being the way blood flows in veins. I feared that he may have suggested some evil to your hearts.›" [2]

It is even permissible for a woman to perform *i'tikāf* with her husband, or by herself. 'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) said:

"One of the wives of Allāh's Messenger [in one narration: Umm Salamah] performed *i'tikāf* with him while she had post menstrual bleeding in which she saw red or yellowish traces; and sometimes we put a tray beneath her while she prayed." [3]

She also said:

"The Prophet (ﷺ) performed *i'tikāf* for the last ten days of *Ramaḍān* until Allāh took his life; then his wives performed the *i'tikāf* after him." [4]

This establishes that women are allowed to perform *i'tikāf*. However, this has two conditions:

1. Prior permission from the woman's *walī* (guardian).

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1 They expressed surprise that the Prophet (ﷺ) would expect them to entertain any suspicious thoughts about him.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dāwūd.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Sa'īd Bin Manṣūr.

4 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim and others.

2. Confidence that the presence of the woman performing *i'tikāf* in the *masjid* would not cause *fitnah* or *khulwah* (seclusion) with men.

If either of these two requirements cannot be fulfilled, *i'tikāf* is not permitted for a woman, as the *fiqh* principle indicates:

"Warding off evil is more important than establishing good."

CHAPTER 9

PERFECTING THE PRAYER

Devotion in the Prayer

REPORTS FROM THE PROPHET AND THE SALAF

A Muslim should always strive to be a good example of a righteous believer: obedient to his Lord, and adhering to His Prophet's *Sunnah*. This is a general rule, which should be applied to the *qiyām* prayer as well. In this regard, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«من قام رمضان إيماناً واحتساباً غفر له ما تقدم من ذنبه.»

‹Whoever stands in prayer during *Ramaḍān* out of faith and expectation (of Allāh's reward), all of his previous sins will be forgiven.› [1]

Earlier in this book, we have discussed many details concerning the Prophet's (ﷺ) *qiyām* during *Ramaḍān*, as well as other times. We described how his prayer was extremely long and devoted, as in 'Ā'ishah's report:

> "… He would pray four *rak'āt*, and do not ask how good and long they were …"

And her report:

> "He would stay in *sujūd* as long as one of you would read fifty *āyāt*."

And Ḥuthayfah's report:

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim and others.

"... Then he read *al-Baqarah* (in the first *rak'ah*); then he made *rukū'*; and his *rukū'* was comparable (in duration) to his standing ..."

Huthayfah then described the Prophet's long standing after *rukū'* and his long *sujūd* after that.

Furthermore, the *salaf* during the time of 'Umar (ﷺ) recited long portions of *Qur'ān* in *tarāwīh*. When 'Umar summoned the reciters and commanded them to lead the people in *tarāwīh*, "He (ﷺ) instructed the fast reciters to recite thirty *āyāt*, the intermediate to recite twenty five, and the slow to recite twenty." [1]

Thus they would recite about three hundred *āyāt* — until some people behind them had to lean on canes because of the long duration of the prayer. And they did not finish their prayer until close to *fajr* time.

In addition, they would make the various parts of prayer comparable in length to the recitation. They would make long *rukū'* and *sujūd*, uttering during them numerous forms of *thikr* and supplications, in accordance with the *Sunnah* [2].

This should motivate us to imitate them in our prayer as much as possible, making it long, and saying plenty of *tasbīh* and *thikr* during *rukū'*, *sujūd*, and in between. With that, we hope to attain, at least, some level of *khushū'* (devotion), which is the spirit and core of the prayer.

Lost Devotion

The majority of Muslims have given up *khushū'* in the *qiyām* prayers, in exchange for their insistence on praying twenty *rak'āt*, which they wrongly attribute to 'Umar (ﷺ). They are more concerned about maintaining this number than about having *khushū'* and tranquility in the prayer!

We see many *imāms* shorten the recitation in *tarāwīh* to such a degree that they barely read anything after *al-Fātihah*. And even for *al-Fātihah*, they read it so fast, that they have completely lost its beauty

1 Recorded by Ibn Abī Shaybah (2:89:2) and al-Faryābī (2:76) with an authentic *isnād*.

2 For details concerning this, review *Sifatu Salāt in-Nabī* by al-Albānī.

...d sweetness. In their quest for speed, they also recite it with one ...reath, contrary to what is confirmed from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he ...ed to read it one *āyah* by one *āyah*.

And if you find among those *imāms* some who recite longer, they ...ll neglect the *sunnah* of making the various parts of prayer comparable to the recitation in length, as in Huthayfah's *hadīth* above. They all pray like pecking roosters, or gears and machines going up and down in a mechanical way, unable to comprehend or contemplate what they hear of Allāh's (ﷻ) words. It's even hard for one to keep up with them without extreme difficulty!

Many authors dealing with the subject of *tarāwīh* do not even try to draw the Muslims' attention to the importance of *khushū'*, as if it is not a relevant matter. They persistently direct their efforts to establishing twenty *rak'āt*, regardless of how they are performed, and how close they are to the Prophet's prayer.

Glimpses of Light

We do not want to neglect, however, the increasing number of authors and *imāms* who have realized the appalling manner in which *tarāwīh* is commonly performed, thereby reverting to praying eleven *rak'āt* with tranquility and *khushū'* — may Allāh (ﷻ) increase their numbers, and keep them firm in guidance, adherence to the *Sunnah*, and perseverance in reviving it.

Hadīths on Perfecting the Prayer

In what follows, we cite a number of authentic *hadīths* calling on Muslims to perform the prayers in a good way, and warning them from neglecting that. By this, we hope to remind the readers of the importance of perfecting all of their prayers — *fard* and *nafl*, *qiyām* or otherwise.

1. Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that a man entered the *Masjid* and prayed while Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) was sitting in a corner of the Masjid. After finishing, the man went to the Messenger (ﷺ) and said the Salām. He (ﷺ) replied, «وعليك السلام، ارجع فصل، فإنك لم تصل.» ‹Wa

'alayk as-Salām (and upon you be peace); **go back and pray, because you have not prayed!›** So he went back, prayed, and then came back and said the *Salām* again to the Prophet (ﷺ). He (ﷺ) replied, «وعليك السلام، ارجع فصلي، فإنك لم تصلي» **‹*Wa 'alayk as-Salām*; go back and pray, because you have not prayed.›** (This repeated three times). After the third time, the man said, "I do not know how to pray better, so teach me, O Messenger of Allāh." He (ﷺ) said:

«إذا قمت إلى الصلاة فأسبغ الوضوء، ثم استقبل القبلة فكبر، ثم اقرأ ما تيسر معك من القرآن، ثم اركع حتى تطمئن راكعًا، ثم ارفع حتى تعتدل قائمًا، ثم اسجد حتى تطمئن ساجدًا ثم ارفع حتى تطمئن جالسًا، ثم افعل ذلك في صلاتك كلها.»

‹When you intend to pray, perform *wuḍū'* in a complete manner; then face the *Qiblah*, say '*Allāhu Akbar* (Allāh is the Greatest),' and recite as much of *Qur'ān* as is convenient for you; then bow down until you achieve tranquility in bowing; then raise you head until you stand level; then prostrate yourself until you achieve tranquility in prostration; then sit up until you are level in sitting; then prostrate yourself until you achieve tranquility in prostration; then stand up until you are level in your standing; then do the same in the rest of your prayer.› [1]

2. Abū Mas'ūd al-Badrī (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا تجزئ صلاة الرجل حتى يقيم ظهره في الركوع والسجود.»

‹One's prayer is not acceptable unless he makes his back straight during bowing and prostration.› [2]

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1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā'ī, at-Tirmithī, Ibn Mājah, ad-Dārimī, at-Taḥāwī

... Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن أسوأ الناس سرقة الذي يسرق صلاته.»

‹The worst thief among people is he who steals from his prayer.›

It was asked, "How would one steal from his prayer, O Messenger of Allāh?" He replied, «لا يتم ركوعها وسجودها.» **‹By not completing the rukū' and *sujūd*.›** [1]

4. The Muslim army commanders, 'Amr Bin al-'Āṣ, Khālid Bin al-Walīd, Sharḥabīl Bin Ḥasanah, and Yazīd Bin Abī Sufyān (ﷺ), all reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) saw a man not completing his rukū', and pecking in his *sujūd* during the prayer. He (ﷺ) said:

«لو مات هذا على حاله هذه مات على غير ملة محمد، ينقر صلاته كما ينقر الغراب الدم. مثل الذي لا يتم ركوعه وينقر في سجوده مثل الجائع الذي يأكل التمرة التمرتين لا يغنيان عنه شيئاً.»

‹If this man dies upon his current state, he would die upon a religion other than that of Muḥammad — pecking in his prayer like a crow pecking blood! The example of one who does not complete *rukū'* and

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(al-Mushkal 1:80), at-Ṭayalisī, Aḥmad, and ad-Dāraquṭnī who said, 'It's *isnād* is confirmed and authentic.' It is indeed as he said, because al-A'mash (one of the narrators) declared hearing (from the narrator above him)), as in the report of at-Tayalisī.

1 Recorded by al-Hākim who considered it authentic; and ath-Thahabī agreed with him. It has a witness recorded by al-Hākim from Abū Qatādah (ﷺ), and another witness recorded by Mālik from an-Nu'mān Bin Murrah, whose *isnād* is authentic, though *mursal*; it also has a third witness recorded by at-Tayalisī from Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (ﷺ), which was verified to be authentic by as-Suyūṭī in *Tanwīr ul-Ḥawālik*.

pecks in his *sujūd* is like that of a hungry person who eats one or two dates that do not satisfy his hunger in the least bit› [1]

5. Talq Bin 'Alī (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ):

«لا ينظر الله إلى صلاة عبد لا يقم صلبه بين ركوعها وسجودها.»

‹Verily, Allāh (ﷻ) does not look at the prayer of the person who does not straighten his spine between *rukū'* and *sujūd*.› [2]

6. 'Ammār Bin Yāsir (ﷺ) said that he heard Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) say:

«إن العبد ليصلي الصلاة ما يكتب له منها إلا عشرها، تسعها، ثمنها، سبعها، سدسها، خمسها، ربعها، ثلثها، نصفها.»

‹A person would pray a prayer, and nothing recorded for him (of its reward) except one-tenth of it, one-ninth, one-eighth, one-seventh, one-sixth, one-fifth, one-quarter one-third, or one-half.› [3]

This *hadīth* means that, "Peoples' rewards vary in accordance with their *khushū'*, devotion, and other manners that conform with perfecting the prayer." [4]

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1 Recorded by al-Ājirī (in *al-Arba'īn*) and al-Bayhaqī. Its *isnād* is *hasan*. Also, al-Munthirī said, "Recorded by at-Tabarānī (in *al-Kabīr*) and Abū Ya'lā with a *hasan isnād*, as well as Ibn Khuzaymah in his *Sahīh*."

2 Recorded by Ahmad, at-Tabarānī (in *al-Kabīr*), and ad-Diyā' ul-Maqdisī (in *al-Mukhtārah*); its *isnād* is authentic. It also has a witness in *al-Musnad* with acceptable narrators, which was judged authentic by al-Hāfiz al-'Irāqī in *Takhrīj ul-Ihyā'*, and al-Munthirī said that its *isnād* is good.

3 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, al-Bayhaqī, and Ahmad with two different chains, of which one was judged to be authentic by al-Hāfiz al-'Irāqī. It is also recorded by Ibn Hibbān in his *Sahīh*, as was stated in *at-Targhīb*.

4 *Fayd ul-Qadīr* by al-Manāwī.

7. 'Abdullāh Bin ash-Shikhkhīr (ﷺ) said:

"I came to the Prophet (ﷺ) while he was praying, and his chest was making a whirring sound like that of a boiling pot (from crying)." [1]

Conclusion

These noble *hadīths* apply generally to all prayers, whether *fard* or *nafl*, and whether they are day or night prayers. The scholars have noted this in regard to the *tarāwīh* prayer in particular; so an-Nawawī said:

"The very manner of performing *tarāwīh* is similar to what was explained earlier for other prayers; all the preceding *thikrs* apply to it, such as the opening supplication and others, completion of *tashahhud* and the supplication that follows it, and other things that were previously mentioned. Even though this appears to be obvious and well known, I note it here because many people neglect it and omit most of the *thikrs* during *tarāwīh*. And the truth is what is mentioned here." [2]

Al-'Āmirī said:

"A matter of great concern that requires noting is that the multitudes of *imāms* who lead people in *tarāwīh* have gotten into the practice of shortening the reading, abbreviating the various parts, and omitting *thikrs*. The scholars have said, 'The method of performing it is similar to that of other prayers in terms of conditions, various manners, and all *thikrs*, such as the opening

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1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, al-Nasā'ī, al-Bayhaqī, and Ahmad, with an authentic *isnād* that conforms with the condition of Muslim. It is also recorded by Ibn Khuzaymah and Ibn Hibbān in their *Sahīhs*, as is mentioned in *at-Targhīb*.

2 Al-Athkār, chapter on "The *athkār* of the *tarāwīh* Prayer'.

supplication, *thikr*s during the various parts, the supplication after *tashahhud*, etc.'

Some of those *imām*s also try to read the *āyāt* mentioning Allāh's mercy, timing their recitation so as to make *rukū'* only when they reach them; by doing this they neglect two important etiquettes for recitation during the prayer: they sometimes make the second *rak'ah* longer than the first; and they pause between *āyāt* that are linked in meaning.

The reason for all this is that the *sunnah*s have been neglected, becoming largely obliterated, to the extent that the one who adheres to them is now considered ignorant by many people because he differs with the majority; this is caused by the spread of evil in our time, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لا تقوم الساعة حتى يكون المعروف منكرا والمنكر معروفا.»

‹The hour will not arrive until (prior to that) the right becomes wrong, and the wrong right.› [1]

Thus be sure to adhere to the *Sunnah*: require it from yourself, and command those who obey you with it. By this you will be saved, secure and happy. The honorable al-Fuḍayl Bin 'Ayyāḍ (ﷺ) said, 'Do not feel lonely on the road of guidance because of the scarcity of its travellers; and do not be awed by the doomed hordes.'" [2]

1 This meaning appears in many *hadīths*, recorded by at-Tabarānī in *al-Awsat*, Abū Nu'aym in *al-Hulyah*, Ibn Waddāh, Ibn Mājah, and others. Some of the reports have been judged to be authentic by al-'Asqalānī, al-Haythamī, and others.

2 Near the end of al-Amīn's book, "*Bahjat ul-Mahāfil wa-Bughyat ul-Amāthil fī Talkhīs is-Siyari wal-mu'jizāti wash-shamā'il*".

CHAPTER 10

SUMMARY

Discussions in this book have extended beyond our initial expectations. This is something unavoidable, because it is demanded by any correct scholarly study. Because of this, we decided to present our worthy readers with a summary in this chapter, which will make it easier for quick reference and application — *in shā'a 'Llāh*.

Important Points

1. It Is Recommended to Pray Tarāwīḥ in Jamā'ah

Praying *tarāwīḥ* in *jamā'ah* is a *sunnah* and not *bid'ah*. The Prophet (ﷺ) prayed it in *jamā'ah* on many nights; and the reason for stopping was only his fear that some people among his *Ummah* would think that it is obligatory if he were consistent in it. This fear ended with the completion of the *Sharī'ah* when he (ﷺ) passed away.

2. The Correct Number of Rak'āt of Tarāwīḥ Is Eleven

The Prophet (ﷺ) prayed *tarāwīḥ* as eleven *rak'āt*. The *ḥadīth* claiming that he (ﷺ) prayed twenty *rak'āt* is very weak.

It is not permissible to pray more than eleven *rak'āt* — which conforms with the Prophet's (ﷺ) practice and command:

«صلوا كما رأيتموني أصلي.»

‹Pray as you have seen me pray.› [1]

Because of this, it is not permissible to add to the *sunnah* of *fajr* or

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others, from Mālik Bin al-Huwayrith (ﷺ).

others.

3. Our View of Those Who Disagree

For those who pray more than eleven for *tarāwīḥ*, we neither consider them innovators nor misguided — if their position results from the *Sunnah* not being apparent to them, and not because they follow their desires.

4. The *Sunnah* Is Better than the Addition

Even if one concedes that it is permissible to add to the number of *tarāwīḥ*, there is no doubt that it is best to adhere to the number that the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed, because he said, « وَخَيْرَ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ. » **‹The best guidance is that of Muhammad.›**

5. ʿUmar Revived the *Sunnah*

ʿUmar (ﷺ) did not innovate in the *tarāwīḥ* prayer; rather, he revived the *sunnah* of praying it in *jamāʿah*; and he maintained the number of its *rakʿāt* in accordance to the *Sunnah*. Whatever was reported differently from him is not authentic in any of its chains; and those chains are such that they do not reinforce each other.

6. The *Ṣaḥābah* Did Not Pray Twenty

It is not confirmed that any of the *ṣaḥābah* prayed twenty *rakʿāt* for *tarāwīḥ*. Therefore, one must adhere to the number of *rakʿāt* established in the *Sunnah* and confirmed by ʿUmar (ﷺ). The Prophet (ﷺ) has commanded us to follow his *Sunnah* and the *sunnah* of the Rightly Guided *Khulafāʾ*.

7. No Excuse for Adding

Even if we assume that adding to the correct number of *rakʿāt* was authentically reported from some of the *ṣaḥābah* (which is not the case), we would have to consider that it was for a specific excuse that does not hold today.

8. Scholars Disapproving the Addition

Praying more than eleven was disapproved by Mālik, Ibn al-ʿArabī, and many other scholars. Furthermore, there is absolutely no *ijmāʿ* (consensus) for twenty *rakʿāt* among the *ṣaḥābah* or the great scholars.

9. Position from the Great Scholars

Rejecting additional *rakʿāt* does not imply rejecting the notable scholars who have allowed them. Disagreeing with them in this issue does not, by any means, imply belittling their knowledge and understanding.

10. Lost Devotion

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Lastly

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Exalted are You, O Allāh; all praise belongs to You; I testify that there is no true god except You; I seek Your forgiveness, and I repent to You.

May Allāh bestow his *ṣalāh* and peace upon the illiterate Prophet, and all of his family and companions. And the last of our calls is, *al-ḥamdu li 'Llāhi rabb il-'ālamīn.*"

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Athān	Call to the prayer.
Āyah	A *Qur'ān*ic phrase approximately equal to one sentence, but sometimes longer or shorter than that; plural: *āyāt*.
Āyāt	Plural of *āyah*.
Bid'ah	Innovation in the creed or in acts of worship.
Da'wah	Call or mission.
Dīn	Religion. It is usually used in reference to the religion of Islām.
Dīnār	A valuable old currency that was made of gold

supplication, [illegible] during the various parts, the supplication after *tashahhud*, etc.[1]

Some of these *imāms* also try to read the *āyāt* mentioning Allāh's mercy, timing their recitation so as to make *ruku'* only when they reach them; by doing this they neglect two important etiquettes for recitation during the prayer: they sometimes make the second *rak'ah* longer than the first; and they pause between *āyāt* that are linked in meaning.

The reason for all this is that the *sunnahs* have been neglected, becoming largely obliterated, to the extent that the one who adheres to them is now considered ignorant by many people because he differs with the majority; this is caused by the spread of evil in our time, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لا تقوم الساعة حتى يكون المعروف منكراً والمنكر معروفاً.»

‹The hour will not arrive until (prior to that) the right becomes wrong, and the wrong right.› [1]

Thus be sure to adhere to the *Sunnah*: require it from yourself, and command those who obey you with it. By this you will be saved, secure and happy. The honorable al-Fudayl Bin 'Ayyād (ﷺ) said, 'Do not feel lonely on the road of guidance because of the scarcity of its travellers; and do not be awed by the doomed hordes.'"[2]

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1 This meaning appears in many *hadīths*, recorded by at-Tabarānī in *al-Awsat*, Abū Nu'aym in *al-Hilyah*, Ibn Waddāh, Ibn Mājah, and others. Some of the reports have been judged to be authentic by al-'Asqalānī, al-Haythamī, and others.

2 Near the end of al-'Āmirī's book, "*Bahjat ul-Mahāfil wa-Bughyat ul-Amāthil fī Talkhīs is-Siyari wal-Mu'jizāti wash-shamā'il*".

CHAPTER 10

SUMMARY

Discussions in this book have extended beyond our initial expectations. This is something unavoidable, because it is demanded by any correct scholarly study. Because of this, we decided to present our worthy readers with a summary in this chapter, which will make it easier for quick reference and application — *in shā'a 'Llāh.*

Important Points

1. It Is Recommended to Pray Tarāwīḥ in Jamā'ah

Praying *tarāwīḥ* in *jamā'ah* is a *sunnah* and not *bid'ah*. The Prophet (ﷺ) prayed it in *jamā'ah* on many nights; and the reason for stopping was only his fear that some people among his *Ummah* would think that it is obligatory if he were consistent in it. This fear ended with the completion of the *Sharī'ah* when he (ﷺ) passed away.

2. The Correct Number of Rak'āt of Tarāwīḥ Is Eleven

The Prophet (ﷺ) prayed *tarāwīḥ* as eleven *rak'āt*. The *ḥadīth* claiming that he (ﷺ) prayed twenty *rak'āt* is very weak.

It is not permissible to pray more than eleven *rak'āt* — which conforms with the Prophet's (ﷺ) practice and command:

«صلوا كما رأيتموني أصلي.»

‹Pray as you have seen me pray.› [1]

Because of this, it is not permissible to add to the *sunnah* of *fajr* or

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1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others, from Mālik Bin al-Ḥuwayrith (ﷺ).

others.

3. Our View of Those Who Disagree

For those who pray more than eleven for *tarāwīḥ*, we neither consider them innovators nor misguided — if their position results from the *Sunnah* not being apparent to them, and not because they follow their desires.

4. The Sunnah Is Better than the Addition

Even if one concedes that it is permissible to add to the number of *tarāwīḥ*, there is no doubt that it is best to adhere to the number that the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed, because he said, «وَخَيْرَ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ.» **‹The best guidance is that of Muḥammad.›**

5. Umar Revived the Sunnah

ʿUmar (ﷺ) did not innovate in the *tarāwīḥ* prayer; rather, he revived the *sunnah* of praying it in *jamāʿah*; and he maintained the number of its *rakʿāt* in accordance to the *Sunnah*. Whatever was reported differently from him is not authentic in any of its chains; and those chains are such that they do not reinforce each other.

6. The Sahabah Did Not Pray Twenty

It is not confirmed that any of the *ṣaḥābah* prayed twenty *rakʿāt* for *tarāwīḥ*. Therefore, one must adhere to the number of *rakʿāt* established in the *Sunnah* and confirmed by ʿUmar (ﷺ). The Prophet (ﷺ) has commanded us to follow his *Sunnah* and the *sunnah* of the Rightly Guided *Khulafāʾ*.

7. No Excuse for Adding

Even if we assume that adding to the correct number of *rakʿāt* was authentically reported from some of the *ṣaḥābah* (which is not the case), we would have to consider that it was for a specific excuse that does not hold today.

8. Scholars Disapproving the Addition

Praying more than eleven was disapproved by Mālik, Ibn al-ʿArabī, and many other scholars. Furthermore, there is absolutely no *ijmāʿ* (consensus) for twenty *rakʿāt* among the *ṣaḥābah* or the great scholars.

9. Position from the Great Scholars

Rejecting additional *rakʿāt* does not imply rejecting the notable scholars who have allowed them. Disagreeing with them in this issue does not, by any means, imply belittling their knowledge and understanding.

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Insisting on adding to the reported number has caused people to pray in a hasty manner, losing *khushūʿ* and, very often, correctness of the prayer.

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Da'wah	Call or mission.
Dīn	Religion. It is usually used in reference to the religion of Islām.
Dīnār	A valuable old currency that was made of gold.

Term	Definition
Dirham	A low-value old currency that was made of silver or copper.
Du'ā'	Supplication.
Fajr	Dawn. It usually applies to the first daily obligatory prayer, whose time extends from dawn until sunrise.
Farḍ	Obligation.
Farḍ Kifāyah	A communal obligation; if some Muslims perform it, the obligation is considered fulfilled by all; and if none does, all Muslims are considered sinful.
Farḍ 'Ayn	An individual obligation, i.e., an obligation that each individual must fulfill.
Fatwā	A religious verdict; plural: *fatāwā* or *fatāwī*.
Fiqh	The ability to understand and derive conclusions from the available evidence. It is often applied to the subject of "*Islām*ic jurisprudence" that deals with the practical regulations in *Islām*.
Fitnah	Trial, test, temptation, or affliction.
Ghayb	The world beyond our senses or perception.
Ghusl	A ritual bath required after intercourse, ejaculation, or after a women becomes clean from her menses.
Ḥadīth	Reports of the Prophet's sayings, actions, and approvals. We use *ḥadīth* (plural *ḥadīths*) to indicate individual report(s), and *Ḥadīth* with upper case H to indicate the subject of *Ḥadīth* specialty.
Ḥajj	Pilgrimage to Makkah.
Ḥalāl	Permissible.
Ḥalqah	A circle or ring. It normally refers to a study circle.

Term	Definition
Ḥarām	Prohibited.
Ḥasan	Good or acceptable. This is usually mentioned when indicating the degree of authenticity of some reports.
Hijrah	Migration. It usually refers to migration from Makkah to al-Madīnah.
Ijmā'	Consensus of the scholars.
Ijtihād	Exerting *juhd* (maximum possible effort) to reach the right conclusion based on the available evidence.
Imām	A leader or distinguished *Islām*ic scholar. It is often applied to the leader of prayer.
Īmān	Belief or conviction.
Isnād	Chain of narrators of a *ḥadīth*.
Jāhiliyyah	The era of extreme ignorance (*jahl*) and disbelief that preceded the advent of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ).
Jamā'ah	A Muslim congregation or gathering. It is often applied to the congregational prayers. *Al-Jamā'ah* (the *Jamā'ah*) refers to the original community of the *ṣaḥābah* and their true followers through the ages.
Janāzah	A funeral or a deceased's prepared body.
Jannah	The gardens of paradise.
Jihād	Striving or fighting for Allāh's cause.
Jinn	An indivisible creation that Allāh created from fire and smoke, and to which belongs Satan. It is sometimes translated as "demons".
Jumu'ah	Friday. It also applies to the Friday prayer.
Kāfir	A person who practices *kufr*. Plural: "*kuffār*".

Term	Definition
Khalīfah	Derives from *khalafa*, which means "succeeded" or "followed". It commonly refers to a Muslim ruler who succeeded the Prophet (ﷺ) in leading the *Muslims*. Plural: *khulafā'*.
Khamr	Alcoholic beverages.
Khilāfah	Successorship. It usually refers to the period of rule of a *khalīfah*.
Kufr	Disbelief or rejection of faith.
Khuṭbah	Speech or sermon.
Maghrib	Sunset. It is usually applied to the fourth daily obligatory prayer, whose time extends from sunset until the red light disappears from the horizon.
Makrūh	An act that is disapproved in *Islām*.
Maḥram	A person who is closely related to another in such a way as to permanently prohibit them from marrying each other. This relationship results from blood, suckling, or marriage ties. A woman's *maḥrams* are: her father, grandfather, son, grandson, brother, immediate uncle (from the mother's or father's side), father in law, son in law, foster son, foster brother, etc. Examples of non-*maḥrams*: cousins (from both sides), step brothers, brothers in law, etc.
Masjid	A place designated for *sujūd*. It usually refers to a mosque.
Mathhab	Way or approach. It usually refers to one of the four *Islāmic* schools of *fiqh* established by the Four *Imāms*: Abū Ḥanīfah an-Nu'mān Bin Thābit, Mālik Bin Anas, Muḥammad Bin Idrīs ash-Shāfi'ī, and Aḥmad Bin Ḥanbal — May Allāh bestow His mercy on them all.

Term	Definition
Muhājir	A *ṣaḥābī* who made *Hijrah* from Makkah to al-Madīnah. Plural: *muhājirūn* or *muhājirīn*.
Mujāhid	A person who performs *jihād*. Plural: *mujāhidūn* or *mujāhidīn*.
Munkar	Disapproved; rejected.
Muṣallā	A place designated for *ṣalāh*. Most commonly, it applies to the grounds where the prayers of *'īd* and *janāzah* are performed.
Mushrik	See "*shirk*".
Nafl	Extra, voluntary, or supererogatory deeds.
Qadar	Allāh's decree and measure.
Qiblah	The direction of al-Ka'bah in Makkah.
Qudusī	Holy. A *qudusī ḥadīth* is a *ḥadīth* that the Prophet (ﷺ) relates from his Lord (ﷻ).
Rak'ah	Means a full prayer unit, because it contains only one *rukū'*. Plural: *rak'āt*.
Ramaḍān	The month of fasting. It is the ninth month of the *Islāmic* lunar calendar.
Rukū'	The act of bowing in the prayer. It derives from the verb *raka'a* which means "bowed down".
Sadaqah	Charity.
Saḥābah	The Prophet's companions; singular: *ṣaḥābī*.
Ṣaḥīḥ	True or authentic.
Salaf	The early righteous pioneers and scholars of *Islām*—the *ṣaḥābah* and their true followers.
Salāh	The prayer.

Term	Definition
Salām	Peace. It also means the greeting with peace (*as-salāmu ʿalaykum*) among the Muslims.
Sanad	Same as *isnād*.
Shahādah	Testimony; it is mostly applied to the testimony of *Islām*: "There is no true deity but Allāh, and Muḥammad is Allāh's Messenger." Also, it is often applied to the most truthful form of physical testimony, which is martyrdom in Allāh's (ﷻ) cause.
Shahīd	A person martyred for Allāh's cause. Feminine: *Shahīdah*.
Sharʿ	It deriving from *sharaʿa*, which menas "legislated". It is usually used in reference to the *Islām*ic Law. *Sharʿī* means a legislated or permissible matter in *Islām*.
Sharīʿah	Same as "*sharʿ*".
Shaykh	Old man; learned man in *Islām*; teacher; narrator.
Shirk	Polytheism, ascribing divinity to other than Allāh, or joining partners with Him in worship. A pagan or a person who practices *shirk* is a *mushrik*.
Siyām	Fasting.
Sujūd	The act of prostration in the prayer.
Sunnah	Way, guidance, teachings, etc.
Sūrah	*Qurʾān*ic chapter.
Tābiʿī	A student of the *ṣaḥabah*. Singular: *tābiʿūn* or *tābiʿīn*.
Tafsīr	*Qurʾān*ic commentaries and interpretations.
Takbīr	Saying, "*Allāhu Akbar* — Allāh is the greatest."

Term	Definition
Tahlīl	Saying, "*Lā ilāha illallāh* — There is no true god except Allāh."
Taqlīd	Imitation — especially without knowledge.
Taqwā	Fearing Allāh and revering him.
Tasbīḥ	Saying, "*Subḥān Allāh* — Exalted is Allāh."
Tashahhud	Pronouncing the *Shahādah*. It is mostly applied to the part of the prayer where one sits, pronounces the *Shahādah*, invokes *ṣalāh* upon the Messenger, and supplicates.
Taslīm	Saying *salām*, especially to conclude the prayer.
Thikr	Remembering Allāh and mentioning Him.
Ummah	Community, nation, or followers.
Wājib	Obligatory or required.
Witr	Odd numbered. The night prayer as a whole is sometimes called *witr* because the total number of its *rakʿāt* is odd.
Wuḍūʾ	Ablution for the prayer. It consists of rinsing the mouth, blowing the nose, washing the face, washing the forearms to the elbows, wiping over the head (including the ears), and washing the feet up to the ankles.
Zakāh	Obligatory charity.
Zinā	Adultery or fornication.
Ẓuhr	Noon. It is usually applied to the second daily obligatory prayer, whose time extends from the sun's crossing the zenith until the time when the shadows are as long as the objects.

Term	Definition
'Abd	Devoted servant and worshipper; plural: *'ibād*.
'Ālim	A scholar or learned man; plural: *'ulamā'*. *'Allāmah* is an exaggerated form of *'ālim*.
'Asr	After noon. It is usually applied to the third daily obligatory prayer, whose time extends from when the shadows are as long as the objects until sunset.
'Ibād	See "'*abd*".
'Īd	A day of celebration in *Islām*. There are two annual *'īds* (*al-fitr* and *al-Adhā*) and one weekly *'īd* (the day of *Jumu'ah*).
'Ishā'	Night. It is usually applied to the fifth and last daily obligatory prayer, whose time extends from the disappearance of the red light from the horizon until the middle of the night (which is half way between sunset and dawn).
'Ulamā'	See "'*ālim*".

B: Index

In this book

A most rewarding and fulfilling part of a Muslim's worship are those blessed moments that he spends praying in the depth of the night: privately addressing his Great Lord, sincerely glorifying Him, humbly imploring Him — beseeching His forgiveness and asking Him for favors.

The voluntary "night prayer", or *qiyaam*, is indispensable for a person's moral, spiritual and physical welfare. Yet it is greatly misunderstood and largely neglected by most Muslims.

This is why we present this book, with two main objectives:

a. *Provide a complete manual on the subject of qiyaam and related issues, in accordance with the Qur'aan, Sunnah, and the understanding of the Salaf.*

b. Present to the reader, in the process, two important works by the prominent scholar Muhammad Naasir ud-Deen al-Albaani (may Allaah bless him): "*Salat ut-Taraaweeh*" and "*Qiyaam Ramadaan*".

This book is not only for Ramadaan, but is for every night of the year. It is a treasure of guidance that one will want to keep by his pillow at night, and grab it as soon as he rises for the greatest bliss of the night. It is a gift that is sure to please and benefit — *inshaa'allaah*.



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